



The Primitive Institution:
OR,
A Seasonable DISCOURSE OF CATECHIZING.

Wherein is shewn,
The ANTIQUITY, BENEFITS and NECESSITY thereof:

TOGETHER

With its Suitableness to heal the Present Distempers of this National CHURCH.

By LANCELOT ADDISON, D. D. Dean of *Litchfield.*

The Second Edition.

LONDON: Printed for *William Crook*, at the *Green Dragon* without *Temple-Bar*, near *Devereux-Court*, 1690.

TO THE

Right Reverend Father in God,

SETH,

Lord Bishop of *SARUM.*

My LORD,

YOur Name is here prefixed to the Ensuing Discourse, neither for *Charm* nor *Amulet*, to save it from the Rude and Censorious; for it doth not at all regard what Entertainment it meets with at such hands. But it assumes this Honour upon the Account of its Author, who having the Happiness to be one of your Diocesan Clergy, thinks all he can perform

in that Relation, ought to be devoted to your Lordſhip, as a ſincere Teſtimony of his bounden acknowledging your Paternal Government.

I need not repreſent to your Lordſhip the many and great Evils which are befaln this Church, through a want of duly obſerving what this Diſcourſe commends. For as your *Singular Prudence* labours to redreſs, and your *Pious Soul* deeply reſents them; ſo your *Great Diſcernment* plainly ſees that they are ſcarce (now) to be removed by any other Method, but a timely, diligent and *Regular Catechiſing*. And that the moſt likely means to eſtabliſh Truth and Holineſs with *Poſterity*, is firmly and early to imprint the *Younger Minds*, who are the hopes of Religion, with that Catechiſm which our Church out of her ſingular prudence and affection hath provided for them.

But I may not purſue this, leſt I ſhould too much faulter in the Laws of Dedication; which oblige me to

to admire and praiſe that Apoſtolical Care, Prudence, Candor, and Severity, which are Eminent in your Lordſhip's Government; and which I dare ſcarce name, for fear I ſhould offend that *Heroick Modeſty* and *Lowlineſs* ſo conſpicuous in your *Great Conduct*. Beſides, I am ſo averſe to the uſual Modes of Dedication, that I cannot comply with them in any thing, unleſs in my hearty Prayers for your Lordſhip's *Good Health*, and *Long Life*; and in teſtifying to the World that I am,

MY LORD,

Your Lordſhip's moſt Humble

and moſt Devoted Servant,

LANC. ADDISON.

TO

TO THE READER.

THE *Condition of this ſmall* Treatiſe *is ſo little agreeable to the preſent Genius of the Age, that there needs no great Sagacity to foretel its Entertainment. But thoſe who value Books not by their Dreſs and Faſhion, but Matter and Uſefulneſs; and who look not ſo much upon what will* take *with* a corrupt Generation, *as help to* amend it; *when they maturely weigh the Subject and Deſign of the* Enſuing Papers, *inſtead of* cenſuring, *will be ready to reſent the weak management of ſo concerning a Theme, and pity to ſee it faln into the hands of ſo unskilful an Artificer.*

For which this is the only Apology, *That what is here written, was not intended for* Perfection, *but* Eſſay; *and*

and that it had never left its retirement, had it not been forced *thence by* impulſe *of the* preſent Neceſſity. *For it is too evident, that this is a* Seaſon *which not only warrants, but exacts our greateſt endeavours to perſwade to ſuch things as may beget, reſtore, and eſtabliſh* Truth *and* Union *among us. And that* Catechiſing *by a more peculiar Energy is thereunto ſubſervient, appears upon this account, that the Church in all Ages has uſed it to that purpoſe.*

The raiſing up of which Inſtitution *(ſo diſaſtrouſly faln in our Borders) in hopes of the great edification which thereby will accrue unto this Church, as it was the firſt motive of this Eſſay, ſo it is the laſt Deſign; for which I ſhall think my ſelf largely recompenc'd, if by this contributed* Mite, *I may provoke the more able to caſt richer gifts into the ſame* Corban.

If what I now write of were to be backt with the Example either of profeſſed Infidels *or* Romaniſts, *I could from* a long Converſation with both

pro-

produce their unwearied care in Catechising; *to which I ever thought the paucity of Converts both from* Infidelity *and* Romanism *ought chiefly to be imputed.*

The Mahumetans *(as in another Discourse I have observed) have their* Mustadarik, *out of which the younger sort are trained up in the* Principles *of a* Mussulman. *And the* Jews Sepher Chinnuck, and Sepher Ikkarim *yield sufficient attestation that they are no* Truands *in this* School.

The Romanists *from being our Rivals in this particular, are become our* Masters; *for not only the* Jesuits, *but also other* Religious, *glory to have made* Catechising *their* Profession; *only with this difference, That the* Jesuits Catechise *the* Rich *and* Ingenious, *and* other Orders *the* Poor *and* Dull. *But their* Diligence *herein herein first sprang from an imitation of* ours. *For till on* Sundays *and* Holy-days *we both preach'd in the* Morning *and* Catechis'd *in the* Afternoon,

noon, *the* Papiſts *did neither. And it was undeniably happy with the* Proteſtant Religion, *when diligent Catechiſing was the chief Engine imployed to ſupplant* Popery, *and give deeper Roots to the* Reformation.

But Catechiſing (*as all things elſe, whereof* human *weakneſs hath the Cuſtody and* Government) *is greatly faln from that* Obſervation *which it had once in this* Church; *yet methinks if nothing elſe, this alone ſhould provoke us to a little more diligence in this* excellent Inſtitution, *to ſee our* Adverſaries *manage it to our* reproach *and damage.*

But, Reader, in Mercy to your Patience, *I will only add, That the* Author *is none of thoſe who impoſe upon others what they will not do themſelves; for he is a conſtant Labourer in that* Vineyard, *wherein he deſires his Brethren to take a little more pains.*

Next,

Next, That he is really of Opinion, the Minister *may sleep with a good* Conscience *of having well discharged his* Duty, *when every* Lords-day, *he observes (as he is bound) the* Churches 59. Canon. *And as for those who do otherwise, he leaves them to the* Reflexions *of their own* Brests.

ADVERTISEMENT.

1. THE *Catechumen, or an Account given by a Young Person to the Minister of his Knowledge in Religion, upon his first Admission to the Lords Table; with the Prefaces of Dr. Addison, and Dr. Scot. Price stitch'd 6 d.*

2. *The Case of Resistance of Supreme Powers Stated and Resolved, according to Doctrines of the Holy Scriptures; by W. Sherlock, D. D. Master of the Temple. Price 2 s. bound.*

3. *The Righteous the best Subjects to the King: Or Godliness no Friend to Rebellion, or Enemy to Civil Government, &c. Price 6 d.*

THE

THE
Primitive Inſtitution.

The INTRODUCTION.

THat in the ſame Church and Nation, there ſhould be no leſs Oſtentation and Noiſe of Religion and Holineſs among ſome, than of Profaneneſs and Impiety among others, will prove a matter of no great wonder to ſuch as duly enquire into the cauſes of both: eſpecially when it is conſidered, that as Ignorance may be the Mother of blind Devotion, ſo it may be likewiſe of deſperate Preſumption; becauſe all Iniquity among Men, proceeds from the want of a right knowledge of God. And as the Foundation of all true Happineſs, and of all true Religion, which is the proper means of attaining it, grows from a right Opinion touching things Divine; ſo the miſapprehenſion thereof is the ground of all Miſery, and of

all those Vices by which it is occasioned.

But that which may justly awaken in us a greater wonder, is, to see all those Methods proving ineffectual which have been so powerfully manag'd for the removal of this pernicious misapprehension; and that we should be still as much under the same Distempers both in Judgment and Manners, as if nothing had been administred for the cure of either. That our own Church in this Age (which for its wickedness seems to be the last) doth make careful Provision, both for the present and future welfare of her Children, is a truth apparent to all that with unprejudiced Minds peruse her holy Offices, Catechism, Articles, Homilies, Rubricks, and Canons. For how meanly soever some may think hereof, yet if they were once thoroughly considered in their circumstances, we shall find that such a prudent and affectionate care is taken therein, that both our Opinions and Lives may be duly informed and regulated, as in no Church of a particular Denomination can be parallel'd. So that it cannot but be admired, how any of this Church should be either *Vicious* or *Erroneous*; considering the

there is nothing wanting on the Churches part, that may keep our Actions Vertuous, and Sentiments Orthodox.

But as in matters of the *Civil State*, many Evils arise from a neglect, or remiss execution of those Laws which are appointed to prevent and suppress them: So in the Church, a lack of seeing her Institutions duly observed, when there wanted no circumstances to exact it, may claim a large share in her present Disorders. For, the letting of Discipline be too loose, emboldened not a few to break it. However, leaving the mischiefs that accrue from this, and the unhandsom and cold Celebration of the *Divine-Service*; the neglect of guiding Sermons by the Articles; the almost utter disusage of the Homilies; the lame observance of the Rubricks, and slight execution of the Canons of the Church: leaving, I say, these for the Animadversion of others, I shall only take notice that the omission, or lazy and lukewarm use of Catechising, ought to be blamed, for much of that Viciousness and *Error*, which is so sadly visible both in Conversation and Judgment. And I am deeply ingaged in this Perswasion, that till publick Catechising fall under a diligent, constant, and unanimous

Practice, there is but little likelihood of ever seeing that Union and Holiness, Peace and Truth, flourish in this Church, for which she was once so famous.

Now that those to whom the great charge of Souls is consigned, may be awaken'd to a little more vigour and diligence in Catechising, and that they would shake off that Supineness, which in this case they cannot retain, but to the aggravation of their own Guilt, and the encrease of the Churches Misery: And that every Station of Men, moved with the Sense of *Duty* and *Emolument*, may contribute to the raising up of the faln Practice of Catechising, is the Design and Aim of the ensuing Discourse: wherein no Method at all was projected, but every thing spoken to as it freely offered it self. And as for *Ends*, the Searcher of Hearts knows, there was none other purposed in the Publication hereof, but Gods Glory, and the Edification of his Church.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

Of Catechiſing. Its Name, Uſe Secular and Religious.

AND the firſt thing that comes to be ſpoken of concerning Catechiſing, is its Name. And I the rather chuſe to begin here; becauſe that the true notice of the Name, will help us to that of the thing. Now that there is a peculiar Force and Significancy, in Words, and that we cannot thereof be ſafely ignorant, is but too evident by thoſe many Errours, that have in all Ages riſen from meer Verbal Miſtakes. And therefore if we could once be ſo happy as to find out the true Importance of Words, and to hit upon ſuch an agreement between them and things, as not to cloud in Speech, what is clear in Nature, but plainly to expreſs things as they are in themſelves; that then one great cauſe of Error, in all ſorts of Learning, would be removed: For it is an Obſervation that will not quickly be antiquated, That the confounding thoſe things in Language, which in their Nature are diſtinct, and the expreſſing

of different Matters by the ſame, or Words of near affinity and likeneſs, hath in all Sciences been a fruitful Mother of Erroneous Apprehenſions.

And this is alſo plain in the Affairs of Religion; in which not only a perverſe miſtake in old Words, but a liberty of introducing new, has ever proved fatal, and deſtructive: For out of *new words*, New Opinions inſenſibly creep into the Church, and with Age grow too ſtrong for her Diſcipline: which being foreſeen by the Holy *Nicene* Fathers, it moved them to *decree* againſt the uſe of ſuch Words in matters of Faith, as were not eaſily to be deduced from, or directly found in Sacred Scripture. *Socrat.* lib. 1. c. 6. And upon the ſame account *Tertullian* would not have our Ears accuſtom'd to *New words*. *Adverſ. Hæret. Cap.* 16. And for the like reaſon St. *Baſil* could not be induced to forego one *Iota* in the old Form, when he was ſollicited by the *Arians*. A cautiouſneſs which we may conceive, was wiſely made uſe of by thoſe *Reverend Perſons*, through whoſe means, by Gods Bleſſing, we enjoy our Religion in its preſent Reformation: For we find that they had an eſpecial care not to innovate in *Words* or *Forms*, when they could with

with due ſecurity retain the old. And to inſtance in what has neareſt affinity with our preſent Subject, we ſee that they have ſtiled that Breviary of Religion, which they compiled, or rather collected out of the beſt and moſt ancient Models of that kind, by the name of *Catechiſm*: Which in its general notice ſignifies a familiar and eaſie Method of inſtilling the rudiments of any Art, Science or Faculty. Which being done by a frequent repetition of the ſame thing, Catechiſing is derived from a Word importing the reciprocation of the Voice, after the manner of an Echo. And in this Senſe it is often to be met with in Secular Authors, from whom it was adopted into Religion, and there retains the ſame Notion and Office. For by Catechiſing, the Church hath always taught the Fundaments and chief Principles of Religion *vivâ voce*. And thoſe that were thus taught, the Greek Writers uſually call *Catechumens*, and the *Latine* Hearers; which might as well reſpect the manner of their Inſtruction, as their Fellowſhip and Communion with the Church: in which they went no further than to be admitted to hear the Principles of *Chriſtian Faith*, made plain unto them. And to Cate-

chiſing, thus underſtood, there will be no inconvenience to affirm, that St. *Paul* alluded, *Rom.* 10. 17. the Ear being as properly the Door of Religion, as of any other Science. That Catechiſing was a way of Inſtruction, not to be reſtrain'd to thoſe Catechumens ſo frequently mentioned in Church Hiſtory, and the Ancient Canons; but that all Believers did therein Communicate, will be made good in another Place of this Diſcourſe.

But if it be doubted whether this be the native meaning of Catechiſing, it then follows that we have recourſe unto the occaſion whence it aroſe. For if Words are notes of that which the Speaker conceiveth, and Conceptions are *Signs* repreſenting that which is ſpoken of; it is neceſſary that he who would rightly underſtand Words, ſhould have recourſe unto the things whence they come. Now the Church (which is Gods School) hath ever uſed Catechiſing as a Term of Art; and we are therefore to underſtand it with reſtraint to ſuch matters as the Church is accuſtomed thereby to inſtruct. Following herein the Rule of *Thomas*, that in Words we muſt not ſo much reſpect their original, exact, and preciſe ſignification and deri-

vation,

ration, as whereunto by use of Speech they are applied. 2. 2. q. 92. *Art.* 1. Now seeing that the Church, which is Gods School, hath still by Catechising taught the first notices of Religion, we may safely cloath it with this Definition: *Catechism is a short and easie Instruction, which explains the Mysteries of Faith, and the whole Body of Christian Doctrine, in such a manner as may be plainly understood by the lowest Capacities.* And if there be any thing cloudy in this definition, it will receive sufficient light from what is spoken of in the following Chapter.

CHAP. II.

The Age of Catechism. The Institution of Adam's *and* Abraham's *Family. The Schools of the Prophets. The continual use of Catchising among the* Jews, *particularly after the Erection of Synagogues. Their Benefit thereby.*

HAving found that Catechism is but Greek for a peculiar manner of Instruction, and that since it was received into the Church, doth signifie a brief and plain Institution of the first and chief grounds of Religion; we may

by the Laws of concluding, infer that Catechising is as ancient as the Principles which are thereby instructed; and these are as old as the first Man. For Religion began when God was *Adam's* Catechist, and gave and instructed him in that Law; in whose observation consisted the main Articles of his continuing in a state of excellent Felicity. In which if he had tarried till he had had an Off-spring grown up to a Capacity of a Religious Education, he would, no doubt, have taught them to observe that Law, which his Maker for that end had assigned him. For we need not be scrupulous to suppose that *Adam* would have been as careful of his Childrens Instruction before the Fall, as he was after it. Some traces of whose care are to be perceived in his Sons Deportment, when they brought their Offerings to Gods Altar as Testimonies of Gratitude and Devotion: Which could not be the effect of meer Natural Instinct, but of *Adam's* Pious Diligence to bring them up Religiously. And though meer Natural Reason may teach Man a Belief and Worship of God, yet to do it with the circumstances of the two first Brethren exceeds, its Power.

The Understanding and Practice of the *Primordial Law*, of not eating the forbidden Fruit, would have been sufficient for *Adam* and all his Posterity; as having in its Womb (to use *Tertullian*) all those Moral Precepts which were afterwards delivered by *Moses*, *Exod.* 20. and by our great Law-giver reduced to two Heads: Love to God; Love to our Neighbour, St. *Mark* 12. 30, 31. For if they had observed the first, they would not have broken Gods Commandment; and if they had done the like to the Second, they would not by yielding to the perswasion of the Serpent, have destroyed themselves; but by love to both, have fulfilled the whole Law. As *Tertullian* argues, *adverſ. Judæos*, *Cap.* 2. That it was needful for *Adam*'s *first Issue* to be instructed in this *Primordial Law*, wherein the whole Morality consisted, none I think will gainsay: That *Adam* (for there was none else to do it) did therein instruct them, we may conclude, not only from the necessity of the thing, which so Wise a Man as the first could not but perceive; but also from *Adams* Justice, to make some amends to his Children in their *Education*, for what he had damaged them by his own *Disobedience*. And if the manner of the Instruction

be

be demanded, I shall content my self with the Opinion of that *Rabbin*, who ventured (discoursing him upon this Subject) to derive their [*Leback*] or present Catechism from *Adam*, whom they rationally imagine to have taught his Sons a short and plain Description of the necessary Principles of Holiness and Honesty: which are the *Sum* of all Catechism.

But that which yet affords us a more evident attestation of Catechising, or delivering and instructing the Rudiments of Religion, *vivâ voce*, in the First Ages of the World, is the unquestionable Tradition of those Precepts which pass under the name of *Noah*: Into which if we look attentively, they will easily be discerned to have been the Universal Catechism of all Mankind, and to contain a compleat Scheme of Duties towards God and the Neighbour.

Now among these Precepts some were greater and more Famous, others of an Inferiour and Obscurer rank. Those of the former condition are here spoken of, and usually set down after this manner.

1. Against strange Worship or Idolatry.

2. A-

2. Againſt Blaſphemy, or the Curſing of the moſt Holy Name.
3. Againſt Effuſion of Blood, or Murder.
4. Againſt Revealing of Nakedneſs, or Adultery.
5. Againſt Theft and Rapine.
6. concerning Civil Juſtice, and Obedience.
7. Againſt Eating the Limb of a living Creature.

Whereof the two firſt reſpect our Demeanour toward God; the next Four belong to the Carriage of one Man toward another; and the laſt forbids all outrageous cruelty to other living Creatures.

But how this laſt ſhould be reckon'd in the number of thoſe Precepts of Natural Right, common to the whole Human Race, is not ſo eaſily to be apprehended; eſpecially when 'tis conſider'd that it was not heard of till after the Flood, when God ſaid unto *Noah*, coming out of the Ark, *Fleſh with the Life, thereof, which is the Blood thereof, ſhall ye not eat*, Gen. 9. 4. Where the eating of Fleſh is not ſimply prohibited, but the abſcinding and Eating the Limbs of living Creatures. And a late Author gives an Inſtance hereof in Lambs ſtones.

The

The Reasons usually render'd of this Seventh Precept, are the avoidance first of Cruelty; and next, of Communicating in the Customs of Idolatrous Nations: Which at once protest both against its Age and Morality. And upon this account it is, that learned Persons have excluded it the number of *Natural Precepts*, and set it in *Noah*'s Ritual of Ceremonies. But there is a general Agreement among the *Jewish Masters*, that the first Six Precepts were given to *Adam* from the very beginning of things, and were the common Law of all Nations under Heaven.

But no such matter can be found concerning the Seventh: Which is so totally passed over in silence by *Job*: who yet takes notice of all the rest, and justifies his integrity by their observance. And because this perhaps is not obvious to every Reader, it may be no way impertinent, to note the Texts, where the *Idumæan* makes his profession.

1. Against Idolatry, *Job* 31. 26.
2. Against Blasphemy, *Job* 1. 5.
3. Against Homicide, *Chap.* 31. 29.
4. Against Adultery, *Chap.* 31. 9.

5. A-

5. Against Theft, *Chap.* 31. 7.
6. Against Injustice, *Chap.* 29. 7. *&c.*

And though these six Precepts, without any remote Collection, may be deduced from the abovesaid Texts; yet in his whole *Book*, *Job* has not left the least intimation of the seventh: which could not have escaped the observation of so wise a Prince, if therein a Natural Equity had been concerned. St. *Augustine*, in his Eighteenth Book and Fourtyseventh Chapter of the *City of God*, affirms that *Job* was neither Native, Israelite, nor a Proselite adopted by their Law; but born and bred in *Idumæa*: And therefore professed not the *six Precepts* upon the account of a Jewish Tradition, but because they were the common Religion of Mankind.

Before the Law, saith *Tertullian*, was written in Tables of Stone, there was an unwritten Law, which was given neither in *Horeb*, nor *Sinai*, nor in the *Desert*; but in *Paradise*. And was naturally both known and kept by the Fathers; who from the observing of the Equity and Justice of this Natural Law, received Titles of Approbation and Honour; as *Noah* was called a *just man*, and *Abraham the friend of God*; Tertul. *c.* 2. *adversus Judeos.*

And

And that this unwritten Law given in Paradise, was the *six Precepts*, we may conclude from what Mr. *Seldon* tells us out of *Moſche ben Maimon*, who (ſaith he) peremptorily delivers, that the *six Precepts were given to the firſt Man from the very beginning of the World*. And therefore ought rather to bear the name of *Adam* than of *Noah*; for the latter can be entitled to them no otherwiſe, than as in him all Mankind was preſerved, as in the former they had been begun. In which ſenſe all Nations and Kindreds of Men, were called the Sons or Children of *Noah*: Among which there was no exteriour Badg of diſtinction, till God gave *Abraham* the Sacrament of *Circumciſion*; which did not leſſen or abate the extent and power of the *ſix Precepts*: for after *Circumciſion*, the Jews as well as the reſt of Men ſtood obliged to their obſervance. Nor indeed was it poſſible to be otherwiſe, ſeeing that therein was contained the Univerſal Religion. And at the coming of *Moſes*, theſe Precepts were ſo far from being evacuated, that they were confirmed, with the addition of others concerning the Sabbath, the Reverence of Parents, and the very thought of defalking other mens Goods. All which make

make up the *Ten words* or *Decalogue*. And that was now Engraven in Tables of Stone, which before was only written in Tables of Fleſh. But the *ſix Precepts* were the *Catechiſm* of the World from *Adam to Noah*, who received the *Seventh*. In which condition Religion continued till *Abraham* received the Precept of *Circumciſion*, upon which came the great diſtinction of Nations in reſpect of Worſhip. And now the Jews had *eight Precepts* for the Rule of Duties, under which they continued until the time that God at *Mara* gave them a Statute and an Ordinance; and by ſpaces filled up their Ritual.

But that which moſt imports the preſent Subject, is the manner how the *Firſt ſix Precepts* were inſtructed: Which without doubt was *vivâ voce*, or by an Oral Inſtitution: for certainly of *things unwritten*, there can be no other means to inſtil and propagate their knowledg: For notwithſtanding that theſe *Precepts* contain'd ſuch an apparent *Equity* and *Right*, as could be by none denyed, who therein had once been duly informed, yet there was a neceſſity of competent means to procure this Information. For let Characters be never ſo large and evident in themſelves, yet the

the faireſt Paper cannot exhibit them, till thereon they be duly placed. And if the Soul of Man be at firſt as a *Book* wherein nothing is, and yet every thing may be written; then either *Education* or *Inſtruction*, *Uſe* or *Diſcipline* muſt of neceſſity fill up this *blank*. And the *Raſa Tabula* of *mans Soul*, as it is moſt ſuſceptive, ſo is it likewiſe moſt concerned to be firſt Engraven with thoſe things which indiſpenſibly reſpect his Duties toward God and his Neighbour; (the Contents of the *ſix Precepts*) And that the Soul cannot be otherwiſe furniſhed therewith, than by *Oral Inſtitution* or *Catechiſm*, will be granted by all who would not have this *Table* writ upon juſt like *thoſe* which *Moſes* received in the *Mount*.

But what in this caſe may ſeem but darkly probable in the two *Patriarchs of Mankind*, is conceived to be clear and evident in the *Father of the Faithful*. For Authors of no contemptible Credit, collect from that Encomium God gave *Abraham*, for his foreſeen care to inſtruct his Children and Houſehold [*to keep the way of the Lord, and to do Juſtice and Judgment*] *Gen.* 18. 19. that this manner of inſtruction is there ſpoken of. For albeit that to do Juſtice and

Judgment

Judgment is a Principle naturally imprinted upon Mans Soul, in a Character no Mortal Power can efface; yet it was Morally impossible for *Abrahams* Family to keep the [*way of the Lord:*] That is, to be acquainted with the Purport and Condition of that Covenant God had made with *Abraham*; where there was no Divine Inspiration, nor any Written Word to guide them; unless *Abraham* by a gentle and easie Method, introduced them into the knowledg of what so intimately concerned them. And not to be scrupulous about *words* or *forms* of Speech, it is more than probable, that this Holy Man taught his Family *vivâ voce*, or familiarly by word of mouth, which is the true and genuine Sense of that whereof we now speak.

But not to place any strength in this Instance, nor in what is observed to this Purpose, either in the Institution of *Jehoash* by *Jehoiada* the Priest, nor what *Solomon* insinuates concerning himself; nor in what the *Rabbins* assert of the *many houses* of *Catechism* that were in *Hierusalem*; nor in what some write concerning the *Schools of the Prophets*, how that one part of their employment was to Catechize: not placing, I say,

any

any ſtrength in theſe Inſtances, which might be urged, as they have been, in favour of the Antiquity of *Catechiſm*; I ſhall fix upon that which yields both a more obvious and certain Teſtimony of its Ancientneſs, namely; That the Jews have continually had, and to this day have the practice of *Catechiſm*, by which they introduce their Youth into the knowledg of God, and the Rites of his Worſhip. 'Tis true, there is ſome difference in the time when this Inſtitution is begun: For the Ancient Jews began not to Teach their Children the Principles of their Religion, till they were compleat Thirteen years of Age; but the Modern Jews in the Eaſtern Parts eſpecially, begin much more early. And this they do, (as *Aaròn Benetàr* a *Sabio* in *Barbary* told me) becauſe of their unſettlement, and for fear a ſudden removal ſhould prevent them in this Duty.

It is very remarkable, that no Footſteps of Catechizing appears in the Service of the Temple; which was indeed ſo wholly Ceremonious, that it may be doubted whether ought of Moral Religion (the chief of *Catechiſm*) was therein either thought of or deſigned. Indeed after the Erection of Synagogues

gogues there appear great indications, that this way of instruction was in no vulgar requeſt: But then in fixing the certain time when theſe Religious Edifices were Erected, there is ſmall agreement among the *Learned*. That Synagogues were built before the Jews return from *Babylon*, is very uncertain. But after they were returned, it is plain that their Land was full of theſe Houſes dedicated to Gods publick Service: wherein all parts of Divine Worſhip (except Sacrificing) were celebrated. And they may be ſaid to have had that Relation to the Temple, which Parochial Churches have now to the Cathedral. But not to diſpute about the Antiquity and Quality of Jewiſh Synagogues, that which I would obſerve therein, as moſt agreeable to the thing in hand, is, That Catechizing was (at leaſt) a Principal part of that Teaching, which was therein frequented. And to atteſt this remark, one known Paſſage out of *Epiphanius*, compared with another in *Fl. Joſephus*, are all the Authorities that are thought needful to be produced.

Epiphanius ſpeaking of the Scribes (who were the chief Maſters of the Synagogues) ſaith that they were Διδάσκαλοι τῶν

τὸν νόμον, Reporters of the Law; and that they taught ὡς ἐπιστήμην γραμματικὴν, a kind of *Grammatical* knowledg therein. And *Josephus* writes, that by vertue of this Teaching the Law, the Jews were as ready to answer any Question demanded of them concerning it, as to their own Name. And the reason he renders of this readiness, is very observable, as to the present Theme, which is this, *Because learning the Principles of their Religion as soon as ever they were come to knowledg, they kept them firmly imprinted* ἐν ταῖς ψυχαῖς, *in their Souls or Minds.* And how well the Circumstances of this way of instructing the Law, suits with Catechizing in the most obvious Notion, I leave the impartial to judg.

Now that the things thus taught were not barely the meer words of the Law, and their naked Reading (as some have supposed,) may be concluded from the good effect and influence which this instruction had upon the instructed. For we find that it preserved them in the true Worship of the true God; which was a work too high to be accomplished by such low means, as *naming, spelling, joyning Letters* and *Syllables* together, and such other *Abcedarian* and *Grammatical*

Nicetius

Niceties. And that by this instruction the Jews were preserved in the true Worship of the true God, is excellently observed in this particular, namely, That albeit the Hebrew Nation, before their Captivity, had Prophets to instruct them in the true Worship of God, yet they were always falling into Idolatry. But when they were returned out of *Babylon*, though they wanted Prophets, yet they kept close, and faithfully adhered to the Worship of the True God. (Though it must not be denyed but that many Corruptions and heterodox Conceits were therein retained.) And the Reason that hereof is rendered, is, the instruction used in the Synagogues: Whereby they were so throughly grounded in what they professed, and so firmly and early rooted in the Knowledg and Service of God, that their defection there-from was even Morally impossible. But when they wanted this plain way of being thus Catechised, they fell into all those Evils, which are the undeniable Consequences of the want of Catechising, even *Diversities of Opinions, Sects,* and *Divisions.*

St. *Paul* Arguing with the *Gnostick,* and concluding him excuseless in what he did, useth this Topick: That he had

not

not only the Law in readineſs to Teach him otherwiſe, but had already therein been a *Catechumen*: But whether we may hence infer, That the Old Synagogue had a formal *Catechiſm* like the Modern, I ſhall not temeratiouſly pronounce. Yet ſomething to this purpoſe may be collected from thoſe Commentaries which paſs under the name of St. *Ambroſe*: Where we find the Office of thoſe Doctors mentioned, 1 Cor. 12. 28. thus expounded: *Illos dicit Doctores*, &c. He calls thoſe Doctors or Teachers, who in the Church inſtructed Children in Reading and retaining their *Leſſons*, according to the Cuſtom of the Synagogue; for their Tradition hath paſſed unto us. If you aſk me what the Leſſons were, which the Doctors taught the Children; I anſwer, The Principles of Religion. If you demand the manner how they were Taught; I reply, In a manner ſuitable to their Capacities. If again you demand what that manner was; I return, Catechizing, in the native and common acception of the Word. But if Catechizing ſhould be ill looked upon, as being a Tradition derived from the Jews; then the greateſt part of Chriſtianity may be had under a jealous aſpect upon

upon the ſame account: for it is moſt certain, that a large ſhare both of *Chriſtian Rites* and *Doctrines* were derived from Judaiſm, which was not to be laid deſolate by Chriſtianity, but compleated and reformed. The Primitive Chriſtianity being (according to Mr. *Selden*) the lawful and Prophetick Off-ſpring of the Old Judaiſm.

CHAP. III.

Catechiſing in times of the Apoſtles. Evidences thereof in St. Pauls *Epiſtles. The Contents of their* Catechiſm.

BUt how dim ſoever the traces of this kind of inſtruction be in the *Jewiſh Diſpenſation*, yet the Foot-ſteps thereof are more traceable in the Goſpel. Where *Catechiſm* is not obſcurely intimated, if we may rely any thing on the Words and Sentences which therein occur to this purpoſe.

And in the Firſt place, it cannot be denied, but that in the inſpired Epiſtles are plainly read of two ſorts of Chriſtians, namely, ſuch as were newly admitted into the Church, compared by St. *Peter* to *New-born Babes*, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2.

and such as had been therein a longer time; called by St. *Paul* the *Perfect*, in respect of their greater Progress in Christian Religion; or the wisdom which descends from above, or which Christ came to Teach and Infuse, St. *Jam.* 3. 17. To the former or these they gave Milk, and instructed them in the easier Points of Religion: But strong Meat was ordained for the later. Who having been first well Catechised in Christianity, were capable of higher Mysteries. And of this we have a clear illustration in the fixth to the *Hebrews*, where we first read of the ὁ τῆς ἀρχῆς τῦ Χρις λόγος, *The Doctrine, or Discourse, of the beginning of Christ!* Or (as we now read it) the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ: That is, a *Catechism* which contained a brief Summary of those Principles which were necessary for every Christian to learn, and to be laid as a Foundation meet for the Superstructure of higher Mysteries, and matters of a deeper reach; such as the Priest-hood of *Melchizedeck*, and how he was a Type of Christ, *Heb.* 7. And of these later St. *Paul* would not intreat, till he saw the former so faithfully received, believed and practised, as that they might be laid aside for the present.

Now

Now the ἀρχαὶ, or Principles wherein Chriſtians were firſt inſtructed, are thus reckon'd by the Apoſtle: Firſt, Repentance from dead works: Secondly, Faith towards God: Thirdly, The Doctrine of Baptiſm: Fourthly, Impoſition of hands, or Confirmation: Fifthly, The Article of the Reſurrection from the dead: And Laſtly, The certainty of *Eternal Judgment*. Theſe were the chief and main Points of the Apoſtles *Catechiſm*, the firſt Principles of the Oracles of God, the Rudiments of Chriſtian Religion, ſaith our Old Marginal Notes, or the *Catechiſm* wherein the younger ſort of thoſe times were inſtructed. And theſe Articles now mentioned, or ſome ſuch like, were (no doubt) that Form of Doctrine, that manner of Catechizing which was delivered to the *Romans*, *Rom.* 6. 17. or as our Margin reads out of the Greek, whereunto *ye were delivered or given up*: Where the ordinary Phraſe is changed by the Apoſtle. For albeit to ſay, To this form of Doctrine you were delivered, is not ſo agreeable either to *the Latin or Engliſh ſpeech*, as, This form of Doctrine which was delivered unto you: Yet the Apoſtle makes uſe of the firſt, to tell us, ſaith *Cajetan*, That not ſo

much the form of Religion was delivered to Men, as that Men were delivered to the form of Religion. That so by this means Religion might be known to have Authority and Power over Man, and not Man over Religion. But not to insist upon this; it need not be doubted that *this form of Doctrine* spoken of by St. *Paul*, was a Summary of Christianity, or the *Catechism* used in those early and best times of Christianity, which contained the first Principles of the Oracles of God. By which some understand the Creed, as *Cyril* of *Hierusalem* in his *Catech.* 4. styled by him the *milky Introduction*, in allusion to St. *Paul*, 1 Cor. 3. 2. *Heb.* 5. 12. Others, of the Creed and Lords Prayer, as *Bede*: Others, the Creed and Decalogue, as *Aquinus*. Others, all those Elements which the *Catechumens* learned, and professed at *Baptism*; whereof the Creed was the Principal. Which with the Lords Prayer the Clergy was injoyned to Teach the People, *Concil. Mogunt. cap.* 45. And it was a *general command* of the Church, that those who were to be Baptized, should have a certain time allotted for the learning and rehearsing of the Creed. Which the Eastern Christians always repeated with a clear Voice, when they came to the

the Holy Communion of Chriſts Body and Blood: As appears in the Twenty ſecond Canon of the *Council* of *Toledo*. But if this ſeem to reſtrain Catechiſing only to ſuch *Catechumens* as in the Hiſtory and Canons of the Church are frequently mentioned; and that this kind of inſtruction was not uſed toward thoſe whom by Baptiſm the Church had already received into her Communion: It then follows, that we ſhew how *Catechiſm* was a plain Inſtitution wherein all Believers did Communicate. And in the firſt place it is manifeſt out of *Oecumenius* (expounding the στοιχεῖα ἀρχῆς λογίων θεοῦ) That there were ſome Points of Chriſtian Religion wherein the Novices were Catechiſed before Baptiſm, and ſome after. Thoſe in which they were Catechiſed before Baptiſm, were, *The neceſſity of Repentance: to renounce the Devil and all his works: To believe in God*, &c. And thoſe Points which they learned after Baptiſm, were the *Myſteries* of our *Saviours paſſion* and *Prieſt-hood*, his taking *our ſins on himſelf*, and working our Salvation; the *Myſteries of our Reſurrection, of the laſt Judgment, and everlaſting reward, or life*. And the *Catechiſm* of theſe was common to all Believers, becauſe neceſſary.

Secondly, That Catechising belong'd to all within the Church, and was not confined only to the Novices in Religion, and Candidates of Christianity, we may confidently infer from the expres's words of St. *Paul. Gal.* 6. 6. where he divides the whole Church, to which that *Letter* was directed, into *Catechist and Catechised.* Whereby the later cannot be meant only those who were not yet admitted to Holy Baptism, Styled by the Church Canons *Catechumens*: For then we must conclude that the *Catechumen* and Believer were all one: contrary to *Tertullian de Pœnit. Cap.* 6. *de Coronâ Milit. Cap.* 2. and all the Fathers: And that there was a Christian Church in *Galatia*, consisting of *Catechumens* or Unbaptised Persons, *i. e.* a Church of Christians without Christians. Which absurd inconveniences cannot be evaded, unless by those Catechised spoken of by the Apostle, we understand such as had received Baptism already, and were still to be instructed in that Religion whereinto by that Divine Rite they had been admitted. So that in St. *Pauls* time Catechising in its Native acception was continued even to those who had attained already to so much knowledg in the Principles of Christianity, as render'd them

them, in the Langnage of the Ancients, *Competentes*, or Persons fit for Baptism, and to be admitted to the higher Mysteries of Religion. The same Apostle told the *Corinthians*, that *he had fed them with Milk*, that is, by the consent of all, with *Catechetical Doctrines*. And there is no doubt that those Texts in *Heb.* 5. 12. *Heb.* 6. 1. are Act. 18. 25. pregnant intimations of this truth. The like may be affirmed of what St. *Luke* has recorded Luke 1. 4. concerning the Introduction of the *Eloquent Apollos*, and his *most Excellent Theophilus*, into the knowledg of Christ. And what has been said, affords sufficient ground of asserting *Catechism* to have been in use with the Apostles, and that it descended from the *Synagogue*. How it was the Practice also of the Primitive Church, is the Subject of the ensuing Chapter.

CHAP. IV.

The Apostles Catechists in several Provinces. The Declension and Restauration of Catechising. Catechists Styled Exorcists, &c.

BUt if we imagine that the marks of Catechising are less apparent in the New Testament, yet if we look into *Ecclesiastical* History, we shall there find that the Apostles had their several Provinces wherein they were Catechists. And that by means of constant Catechising, many Kingdoms within Forty years after *the Passion* received an alteration in their Pagan Ceremonies. Although it must be confessed that it was not long till the Malice and Envy of the Devil and Man brought a decay in this most useful Institution. For in the second Age, we read that Catechising was so far declined, that *Origen* (living in the Two hundred and thirtieth of Christ) was honoured with the Title of its Restorer. But where this Restauration of Catechising by *Origen* was affected, is not so evident. There is a great probability that *Judea* was the Scene of so good an Action. For we read that

that he was very kindly received there, after he fled out of *Alexandria*, upon his falling into disgrace with the Christians of that Country, because in the time of *Decius* he had offer'd Incense to an *Idol*, to save his Body (of which his care was not always justifiable) from being defiled by a filthy *Ethiopian*.

In *Alexandria*, *Origen* could not be said to restore Catechising, for it is expressly affirmed, that there he succeeded in *Cathedrâ Catechetica* his Master *Clemens*, as *Clemens* had done his Master *Pantenus* in the same Chair. And of these two later, we are told, that they made it their Employment to Teach the Grounds of Religion, not by Sermons or Homilies, but by *Catechism*, in such Schoolls and Colledges, as in great likelyhood they themselves had founded for that purpose.

So that we see how in *Alexandria* (and we may hope that the like was in other Parts) there was a succession of *Catechists*; who were also called *Exorcists*, not only because (as *Isidore* explains the word) by Prayer in the Name of Jesus they cast *unclean Spirits* out of those who were possessed: Nor meerly in regard of Exorcising the Pagan *Catechumens*, when they came to be Baptized (as

is to be seen at large in *Burchardus Urmatensis*) but because that by their diligent Catechising the Principles of Christianity, they pulled down Idolatry, and thereby cast Satan out of his Kingdom, and dispossessed him of that Tenor which by Idol-worship he had so long usurped. And the first part of the Vow of Baptism, binds the Baptized to renounce Idolatry under the name of Devil. That Exorcising was an Office of good repute in the Ancient Church, and not to be invaded by the *Laity*, is clear out of *Tertullian*, who in his Book *adverss. Haret. Cap.* 41. tells, how the very Heretical Women were become so shameless and malepart, that they durst Teach, Dispute, Exorcise, and even Baptise.

Mr. *Calvin* makes it a probable conjecture, that the Epistle to the *Hebrews* was not Penn'd till some time after the Gospel was, and the Church had erected a form of Government, and had Constituted among other things, an Order of Instruction, or *Catechism*, in which both the Adult Converts, and Children of Believers were to be Taught: And he further adds, that those Principles mentioned *Heb.* 6. had respect unto the usual and established form of *Catechism*. Now if this conjecture be argumentative, and referred

ferred to its proper place, there will need no more to prove Catechiſing to be of Apoſtolical Inſtitution and Practice.

CHAP. V.

The Antiquity of Catechiſm *probable upon the account of its convenience: In reſpect of the Object; Method of Inſtruction.*

BUt ſuppoſe that all which has hitherto been obſerved be not evident, nay, that nothing of this way of Teaching was ever in uſe with the Primitive Inſtructors of Chriſtianity, which would be a very uncouth ſuppoſal; yet this doth only conclude againſt the Age, but not the convenience of *Catechiſm*. It no way proves that ſuch a way of inſtruction had not been highly rational, to introduce ignorant Infidels into the knowledg of the true Faith. For all thoſe who by ordinary means were to be converted to Chriſtian Religion, were no leſs ignorant of its Principles, than thoſe Infants who are born within the Church; and therefore to be Catechiſed therein, was as proper and requiſite for them, as for theſe: For the ignorance of the one, ass

as well as of the other, was to be removed by ſuch means as all diſcreet *Teachers* have thought ſuitable to that end.

Now it is obvious to every Capacity, that no Mans ignorance can be removed by *Rhetoricating Harangues*, *Pompous Diſcourſes*, *profound Reſearches*, &c. But by humble and plain Leſſons: Eaſie and obvious Rules: And ſuch *A. b. c.* Rudiments, as fall under the comprehenſion of the rude and unlearned; and which are proper to prepare them for higher Leſſons. In brief, though the things which are taught be in themſelves ſublime and difficult, yet the manner of Teaching them muſt be humble and eaſie. And this way of inſtruction was (no doubt) purſued by the Primitive Doctors, who did not only prepare by Catechiſing the ruder Infidel to receive Baptiſm, but did alſo by the ſame courſe build up and educate thoſe into a more perfect knowledge of Chriſtianity, whom they had already Baptiſed. And therefore Κατηχεῖν and Οἰκοδομεῖν, to Catechiſe and Edifie, are with Grammarians terms expreſſive of each other.

And this makes Catechiſing highly convenient in reſpect of the true Method of learning: For therein is obſerved the natural path of inſtruction, which ever begins

begins with ſhort and obvious notions, to the end the Learner may not be diſcouraged with a difficult and perplexed entrance. For if the minds of Novices, or young Diſciples, ſhould be loaden and puzzled with multitude and variety, or with obſcureneſs and prolixity of Rules, they would be in danger to reject the whole Inſtitution, for the irkſome painfulneſs of its firſt Grounds. And albeit that all beginnings are attended with Hardſhips: Yet they ought in all reaſon to be reduced to as great an eaſineſs as their Nature will afford; to the end that they may not diſhearten the Undertaker. This we ſee is the courſe of all Arts and Sciences, both Liberal and Mechannick, which have their Introductive and Initiatory Syſtems, containing ſuch eaſie Elements as being firſt known, fit the *Learner* for deeper Documents. And theſe lower Rudiments hold ſome reſemblance with that leſſer ſize of Vertues, which ſome *Platoniſts* call Purgative, becauſe they are firſt taken into the Soul to cleanſe and prepare her for the reception of *Greater*. And in Religion it is as requiſite as in human Arts, that the firſt Leſſons be framed according to the weak and ſlender Capacities of youngeſt *Beginners*.

Now

Now as there is ſmall probability that in Writing he ſhould ever be able to give the true proportion of Words, who never learned the firſt *draught* of *Letters*: So there is no great aſſurance, that any one ſhould make any ſolid and firm Progreſs in the Myſteries of Chriſtianity, who was never acquainted with the Principles thereof: or, That thoſe ſhould be able to give any good account of the hope that is in them, who never learned the Articles of *Faith*, on which their hope is founded.

And this is a Clue that leads us to the right way of grounding Religion: for by what is ſaid, it is eaſie to perceive, that ſolid Catechiſing is to the orderly Structure of *Spiritual Knowledge*, what a ſure Foundation is to any material Fabrick. And therefore he that would edifie himſelf, or others, in Chriſtianity, without this Ground-work, build but a Viſionary Church, or a Houſe upon the Sand. As hath been ſadly viſible in thoſe Perſons who being not founded upon this Rock, have been quickly ſhaken and blown down with every Wind of *Corrupt Doctrine*, vented by Men crafty to contrive deceit. It being impoſſible that thoſe ſhould be ſtedfaſt in ſuch Principles of Religion, where-

wherein they were never rightly and duly instructed.

CHAP. VI.

Catechism necessary in respect of the encrease and advancement of Spiritual Knowledge: To have a distinct Understanding of things necessary to Salvation, &c.

AND not only the sure grounding, but also the regular and solid advance and increase in the Knowledge of *Things Divine*, makes Catechising a necessary Introductive. For unless by this means we be firmly principled in Christianity, our knowledge therein will be both small and unstable: and as a pernicious consequent thereof, we shall become trifling and affected in that little we know. For it fares in Divinity as Philosophy, wherein a little smattering Knowledge makes Men vain and assuming, whom a deeper insight therein would render composed and settled. And this has been, and is still, miserably apparent in the Ancient and Modern Sectaries, whom a meer conceit of knowledge hath tempted to assume and usurp

uſurp the Place and Function of Teachers, underſtanding neither what they ſay, nor whereof they affirm, 1 *Tim.* 1. 7. And indeed their ignorance is the Mother of ſuch aſſuming Knowledge, as is ſeen in our great Pretenders to *Spiritual Science*, who but too exactly prove themſelves deſcended of thoſe Old *Gnoſticks*, who were ſo peſtilential to the Primitive Church; being notoriouſly addicted to Blaſpheme, rail at, and ſpeak evil of the things they know not; and in a peculiar manner are gifted with Maliciouſneſs, Avarice, Schiſmaticalneſs, Rebellion, and Contumacy: According to their deſcription in St. *Jude* 10. 11. 12, &c. And the want of having been duly acquainted with the true grounds of Religion, is one main reaſon why they are in that *Divine Science* ſuch Smatterers and half-witted; whereof there is ſmall hopes ever to have them cured, but by a full Inſtitution in thoſe Elements which are undeniably requiſite to ſound Knowledge.

But Catechiſing is not only neceſſary upon the account of a regular entrance and encreaſe of Knowledge in Religion, but alſo to give us a clear intuition of thoſe particular Truths whereof we cannot be ignorant, but with the peril

peril of our eternal Happiness. For notwithstanding that all things necessary to Salvation are clear and plain in Scripture, yet the Scripture it self is so spacious a Field, that even a wary Traveller may therein lose himself. And besides this, the things necessary to be known by us in order to our future Welfare, are in *Sacred Writ* so often mingled with things that are otherwise, that it exceeds the generality of Capacities to find them out, and rightly to sever. Those that are idle (as the most are in this Study) will not take pains; and those that are ignorant have not the ability to distinguish, collect, and reduce such *necessary Points* to their respective Chapters. And yet till such Points be plainly digested into *several Heads*, many, at least the the illiterate Multitude, will unavoidably want a competent Knowledge of what is necessary both to their Temporal and Immortal Happiness. Now that the gathering of these necessary Truths into *Sums* and *Models*, is the proper Work of *Catechism*, is visible in all those *Systems* which have ever born that Name. And of this Truth, our own *Church-Catechism* yields a sufficient Testimony: In which all things that concern *Faith*, *Practice*, *Prayer*, and *Doctrine*; are collected

lected into ſuch ſhort and plain *Sums*, that the weakneſs of no Mans Wit can either hinder altogether the Knowledge, or excuſe the utter ignorance of things neceſſary to Salvation. For whoſoever, with a mind free from Prejudice, ſhall impartially peruſe the *Church Catechiſm*, he therein may obſerve all ſaving Truths, reduced to ſuch ſhort, but full Heads, that the weak are not left to the hazardous, nor the ſlothful to the laborious re-ſearch thereof in Holy Scriptures.

CHAP. VII.

Catechiſing the moſt ſutable means to heal the Diſtempers of this Church. Several Propoſitions to be ſuppoſed. A ſhort digreſſion concerning our Diſorders.

BUT we will yet ſuppoſe that all which hitherto has been delivered, ought to receive no better eſtimation than meer ordinary Diſcourſe; and that we are to proceed upon a new Ground, and examine the neceſſity of Catechiſing in reſpect of the preſent Temper and Diſpoſition, or indeed rather Diſtempers and Diſorders of this Church and People. And in order unto this, it will

will not be altogether impertinent and
seless, a little to consider what our pre-
ent Disorders are.

And in the First Place we cannot
ut observe, that our Declension both
om the Design and Rule of the Gospel,
not conspicuous only in those grand
ebauchees, who grow weary of the
ame of Christ, or profess it only to
isgrace it: But also in those who seem
ict and severe in performing all the
ormal and Exteriour part of Disciple-
ip. Even those I mean, who are zea-
us Hearers of Christs Word, and con-
ant Communicants at his Table, not
rofessing Devotion to any other. For
en these are content (as occasion serves)
abandon that Purity, Continence,
eekness, Humility, Candor, Merciful-
s, and other instances of a sweet Na-
re, so vehemently urged by our Divine
w-giver, and which are the genuine
uit of true Christian Principles, for
ut one Law of sordid Interest, brutal
assion, and churlish Self-preservation,
hough they cannot but acknowledge,
ut all these are totally opposite to the
e Spirit of *Christianity*. And besides
ofessed Politicians, there are others who
m to look upon Religion as a meer En-
e of *State*, and a thing that is as

tractable

tractable for Battery as Defence. And who, notwithstanding their contrary Pretences, live as if they regarded not what Christ chiefly aimed at by his Incarnation, Death and Resurrection. And how that he gave himself for us (both in his Birth and Death) to redeem us from all iniquity, and to purifie unto himself a peculiar People zealous of Good Works. And that he rose from the dead to bless us, in turning every one of us from our Iniquities. And that the main design of our inspired Christianity, is the entire Reformation of our Lives, and to make us as good as our Profession.

But besides this sort of Nominal Christians there is another, which are so far transported with the opinion of that Union which they fancy already to enjoy with Christ, that they dream to be in present Possession of that Vision which is peculiar to the future State. And they are so dazled with the supposititious Glory of their Spiritual Perfection, that they contemn the means ordained to make them truly perfect, because they fancy they have arrived at it already.

And with these may be joyned all such who are so closely addicted to their own Opinions, that they think it a mat-

ter

of Conscience, Piety and Religion oppose and condemn whosoever are of their Mind and Perswasion. Since hose rise we have been under a sen-ble decay of Charity, and (as a natural nsequent thereof) an encrease of wick-ness.

But if these ingross not all the occasi-s of our Disorders, there is another sort People who will fill up their measure: hose I mean who pervert the plainest riptures to such a meaning, as doth help to carry on their Designs: And at is yet worse, who make it matter Conscience to assert that Sense of the xt which they have perversely mista-n. And this deifying our own Inter-tations, and tyrannically enforcing m upon others: This restraining of Word of God from that Latitude Generality, and the Understandings Men from that liberty wherein Christ his Apostles left them, is, and hath n the only Fountain of all the Schisms the Church, and that which makes m Immortal: The common Incen-ies of Christendom, and that which s into pieces, not the Coat, but the wels and Members of Christ: *Ridente , nec dolente Judæo,* Take away e Walls of Separation, and all will quickly

quickly be one. Take away the damning of Men for not ſubſcribing to the Words of Men, as the Words of God; require of Chriſtians only to believe Chriſt, and to call no Man *Maſter* but him only. Let thoſe leave claiming Infallibility, who have no Title to it; and let them that in their *Words* diſclaim it, diſclaim it likewiſe in their *Actions*. In a word, take away tyranny in Opinions, by which the Devil withſtands the Power of *Truth*, and reſtore Chriſtians to their juſt and full liberty of captivating their Underſtandings to Scripture only, and as Rivers, whoſe Paſſage is not interrupted, run all to the Ocean; ſo it may well be hoped by Gods Bleſſing, that *Univerſal Liberty* thus moderated, may quickly reduce us to Truth and Unity. Theſe thoughts of Peace may come from the God of Peace, to whoſe Bleſſing I recommend them. And that this may not be looked upon for ſome ſingularity in my own Perſwaſion, I have tranſcribed the Words out of Mr. *Chillingworth*, and he out of another, and encloſed them in a Parentheſis.

But taking no delight to travel further in ſearch of thoſe Diſtempers which I am unable to remedy; the only com-

fort

fort is, that they cannot be looked upon as the Iſſues of our Religion, nor any way be charg'd upon the Principles we profeſs. And therefore we muſt ſeek elſewhere to lay the Imputation: and I ſhall go no further than to what I mentioned in the Introduction, even, the Omiſſion, or Luke-warm uſe of Catechiſing.

And here in the Firſt place, it cannot be denyed, how that the generality of the People of this Kingdom, have for many Years (at leaſt during the time of our Inteſtine Wars) either been deſtitute of all Catechiſing, or have been Catechiſed only in ſuch Principles, as were good for nothing but to eſtabliſh the Elder in a curſed Schiſm and Rebellion, and to infect the Younger with the ſame Contagion. The ſad effects whereof are ſtill viſible in the unpeaceable Tenets of ſome, and in the want of a due underſtanding of Religion in moſt. In reſpect of which, we have need to be taught again, which be the firſt Principles of the Oracles of God; being become ſuch as have need of Milk, and not of ſtrong Meat. The greateſt part of the common People, being ſo far unable to reap any benefit from the handling of abſtruſer Myſteries in Eloquent

and

and Elaborate Discourses, (which is so studiously pursued by our *Junior* and *Florid Theologues*) that they want instruction in the plainest parts of *Catechistical* Doctrines. For notwithstanding that we boast much of our Knowledge of Christ, and that our Proficiency is so great in Religion, that we conceive our selves wiser than our Teachers; yet if the Tree may be judged by its Fruits, we shall be found shamefully ignorant of what we assume to know, and to have little of that Wisdom which descends from above, which Christ came to teach and infuse, and which is Pure, Peaceable, Gentle, easie to be entreated, merciful, without Hypocrisie and Wavering.

In the Second place, we cannot but with deep Resentments observe, that since the time God turned again our Captivity, and restored this Church to the free use of his Ordinances, Catechising has met but with cold Entertainment, even from those by whom it ought to have been most lovingly caressed. For in most places it has been looked upon rather as a Foreigner, than a Native of the Church; and as Fruits of their Mouth, never in Season but for a few Days in *Lent*: And even then too,

the

the *Church-Catechism* is generally taught, without any such explanation as is needful, in respect of those slender Capacities to whose instruction it is chiefly devoted.

And if, in the Third place, we consider who those are, which on the one hand hinder the progress and settlement of Unity, Peace, and Concord in this Church, by an undutiful froward resisting of *her Laws*: Or, who they are that on the other hand Apostatize and utterly forsake her Communion; it will be found upon due examination, that we have laid the ground of the Disobedience of the one, and of the defection of the other, in a want of a timely and diligent Catechising.

And as for the First sort, namely, the Disobedient and refractory (who are now known by the very candid Name of *Dissenters*) they cannot pretend to a more plausible excuse of their Undutifulness, than that they were never duly Catechised to the contrary. For granting them to be Persons not totally forsaken of all Ingenuity and right Reason, we cannot imagine that they should so foully violate their bounden Duties both to *God* and *Man*, had they ever been fully taught, or did clearly

retain any thing but an imperfect and prejudicate knowledge of *those Duties*, as they are plainly set down in the *Church-Catechism*.

And as for the Latter sort, to wit, those who have Apostatized and faln from ours to the Roman Perswasion, they have been so far from having their first Tinctures and Foundation in Religion according to our publick *Catechism*, that they might say thereof as those in *Acts* 19. 2. did of the Holy Ghost. But we must limit this Observation chiefly to those who had the unhappiness to be born in this Church when she was under the Cross, and wore the Marks of her great Master. And as for those who had been instructed in our *Church Catechism*; yet before they left us, they had so far unlearnt it, as that they had retain'd of that System of our Religion such loose, rambling, and incoherent Notions, as if it were wholly Enthusiastick, or had been compiled by Persons deeply *Hypochondriacal*. And for closure of this Paragraph, I shall only add, That none could ever be met with, who for Ends truly Spiritual and Religious, did ever abandon this for the *Roman Church*, who had been throughly grounded in her *Catechism*.

An

And there will want no Reaſons to ſupport this Aſſertion, if it be duly conſidered, how the very Frame and Contexture of the *Catechiſm* doth obviate and oppoſe all the main Errors of Popery, as they relate either to Faith or Practice; to Prayer or Doctrine.

And Firſt, he that has been duly Catechiſed in the Apoſtles Creed, will not only be armed againſt a ſpurious Explication of the Old Articles of our Faith, but alſo againſt a needleſs addition of New ones. For he will find, that the firſt *Twelve* contain ſuch a perfect Summary of all ſaving Truths ſimply neceſſary to be believed, that thoſe Articles added thereunto by the Council of *Trent*, ought to be rejected upon the account of being *Superfluous*. And at the ſame time he will find ground enough to explode that *Implicite Faith*, ſo much relyed upon in the *Romiſh Church*, when conſiders the neceſſity of a perſonal Belief, as it is clearly required in the firſt Word of the Creed, which in Latine gives name to the whole.

And in the next place, as to thoſe Errors of Popery that concern our Practice, they will be certainly diſcovered and refuted by a right underſtanding of the *Decalogue*, which by all is grant-

ed to be a clear and perſpicuous Rule of what we are to do both toward God and our Neighbour.

And a Man that is well grounded in the Doctrine of the Firſt Commandment, knows, that he muſt reſerve all Divine Honour, Truſt, Devotion to God alone, and that he may beſtow no part thereof upon the Creature; and therefore cannot but avoid and abhor thoſe *Romiſh Doctors* that would make him a Client to the Saints, and a conſtant Votary to the Bleſſed Virgin and his Guardian Spirit. He that is well grounded in the Doctrine of the Second Commandment, will never be induced to believe, that the Image is to be adored with the ſame Worſhip that is due to what is worſhipped: He will be wary of admitting any bodily repreſentations of the Holy Trinity: and look jealouſly upon all the Doctrine of Image worſhip, which he ſees to be vindicated with a few remote and ſuſpicious Diſtinctions, deviſed by the Fathers of that Doctrine on purpoſe to maintain its Credit. He that is throughly inſtructed in the Doctrine of the Third Commandment, and hath thence been taught to tremble at, and reverence the Holy Name of the Almighty, will never be induced to believe,

that

at frequent Curſing and Swearing, if
ſtomary, is Venial, or a Sin which is
rdonable in its own Nature, and for
hich the Favour of God cannot be for-
ited: That equivocating in Oaths is
wful: That our moſt Solemn Oaths
y be diſpenſed with: That the dread-
l Name of God may be uſed in the un-
rrantable exorcization of the Crea-
res: That Underſtanding and Devo-
n are not neceſſarily required to our
vocations upon God. He that has
en throughly informed of the mind
its eternal Author in the Fourth Com-
ndment, will never give up himſelf to
Religion that prefers a Mans Day be-
re Gods, or a Saints Day before the
rds: Which would alter the Inſtitution
God himſelf, as was deſigned by Pope
loeſter, who decreed that Thurſday
ould be kept for the Lords Day. He
at hath well learned the Fifth Com-
ndment, muſt do great Violence to
s Underſtanding, before he can chuſe
be of a Religion that loves to drink
e Blood of princes: That abſolves
bjects from their Allegiance to their
awful Sovereign: That gives Power
a Vicar to depoſe Princes at Pleaſure:
hat Arms Subjects with Power to mur-
er their King. The like may be

ſaid of all the Precepts of the Royal Law of God, which is the moſt perfect Rule of our Obedience, and which we are Taught to violate, ſo ſoon as we have given up our ſelves to Popery, and to the Service of the *Roman Moloch*. And though theſe are Myſteries which the *Romiſh Seducers* carefully conceal, and ſometime zealouſly inveigh againſt, while they are compaſſing *eaſie Proſelytes*, with whom they deal in the moſt ſpecious Pretences; yet they have no ſooner deluded them to give up their Names to Popery, and thereupon to ſhake Hands with all liberty of judging for themſelves, than by degrees they let them know what is to be done. And if they ſtartle at doing what is commanded them, this is preſently cenſured for a Relick of their *Old Hereſie*, and that there was ſomething wanting in their Converſion, which cannot be ſupplied, but by acting throughly all the moſt horrible Injunctions of their New Faith.

And by the ſame means of being well Catechiſed in the Lords Prayer, a Man will be able to apprehend and reject the many Errors Popery would impoſe upon him in that high concern. For thereby he will clearly perceive that Prayer ought be made to God only, and that none to

can

can ſhare with him in that, or any other part of Divine and Religious Worſhip. And that for this reaſon he ought not to embrace a Religion which enjoyns him to pray unto Saints and Angels, and that too not only to have them intercede to God for him, but alſo to help him in his Neceſſities, and to deliver him both in Bodily and Ghoſtly Dangers. And that this may not be thought the fault of Roſaries, Hours, and Books of private Devotions (for which the Church of *Rome* is accountable, as having confirmed them by her Authority) it is alſo the Tenor of her *publick Service*: as is plainly to be ſeen in the Collects, Hymns, and Litanies of that Breviary which was reſtored by the Council of *Trent*, and authoriſed by ſeveral Popes, and which is at this day in uncontroulable uſe through all the Papal Dominions.

And we might alſo obſerve the like concerning the Doctrine of the Sacraments in which whoſoever is once fully inſtructed according to the *Catechiſm* of this Church, will quickly diſcern the Abuſes thereinto introduced by Popery. To mention no more than what belongs to the Author of a Sacrament; which our *Catechiſm* aſſerts, and which is an

undeniable Truth, to be only Christ. And therefore all those things are to be excluded the number of Sacraments, that are not of his immediate and clear appointment. And that *Orders*, *Penance*, *Confirmation*, *Marriage*, *Extream Unction* (all Romish Sacraments) are not of Christ's Institution, is easily discernable to Men but slenderly versed in the Holy Bible; and therefore not to be received for the Sacraments of Christ, but Inventions of those, who teach for Doctrines the Commandments of Men. Now by these imperfect intimations we may safely infer, That those who have had their Foundation in Religion surely laid according to the publickly allowed *Catechism* of this Church, must have other Ends to serve than those of Religion, and drive other projects than Gods Honour, and their own Salvation, who forsake her Communion for that of *Rome*.

But to return: What ever hath unhappily contributed to our Revolting to the one hand or the other from the Established Religion of this Church, there is none that will deny but that the lack of a plain and solid Catechising has had therein a very large share. And therefore we may conlude, That the careful

ful practice of that, will be a chief means to reſtore Union and Peace, the Omiſſion whereof hath occaſioned the contrary: And indeed, Catechiſing ſeems the only proper way not only to ſtrengthen thoſe that do ſtand, but to raiſe up thoſe that are faln; if we conſider how ineffectual all other ways have proved, which have been managed to this end. Which now come to be ſurveyed.

CHAP. VIII.

The Methods uſed for our reclaiming, ſurveyed, proving ineffectual, &c.

AND here we need not be told, how Indulgence and Clemency, Acts of Amneſty and Grace, have been ſo far unable ſo much as to work us up to a *good Humour*, that like freſh Paſtures to unruly Beaſts, they have only ſerved to ſtrengthen us for a ſturdier reſiſtance. Nor need we be told of making Converts with the *Churches Patrimony*: for though by this means ſome may be invited to bear the Ark of God, yet they do it but like the *Philiſtins* Kine, who were ſtill lowing after the Calves

had left behind them. It needs not be demonſtrated, that our frowardneſs and opiniaſtrè are not to be cured by ſuch Methods: But that which I would chiefly take notice of, is, that *Diſputation* and *Preaching*, which out of an agreeableneſs that they are generally thought to bear to our diſtempers, and the powerfulneſs of their management, have obtained a *Name* to be the only proper remedies. But the continuance of the Malady, is a convincing Argument that theſe are not ſo proper for this purpoſe, as is ſo generally ſuppoſed. And give me leave to ſpeak of theſe two freely; and firſt of Diſputation, which is a meer empyrick preſcription in order to heal our preſent diſtempers. For though Diſputation, as it is managed by the Pen, may have got a great Vogue in the World, yet we can never hope that our *Diſſenting Judgments* ſhould hereby be reconciled, if with due ſeriouſneſs we conſider; Firſt, the manner of their conduct: Secondly, the matter to be diſputed: Thirdly, the perſons thereby to be wrought upon.

And Firſt, If the conduct of diſputes fall under a calm, unprejudiced and reflexive review, (as they appear in Print) the Pen-men thereof ſeem to have intended rather

rather the defamation, than conviction of each other; and to have been of an opinion that men were to be refuted, as *Mercury* of old was worſhipt, by throwing dirt and ſtones in their Face. But we have been taught by miſerable experience that the laſhing of a *Few*, hath been ſubſervient to no better end than to exaſperate the *whole Party*: And that our keeneſt Arguments, if we may judge by the Event, have only ſerved to alarm the Adverſary into a better proviſion for future reſiſtance, and to ſtrengthen their opinion in that part wherein the *Attack* had diſcovered it to be the weakeſt. But grant (as indeed we muſt) that the Diſſenters (to whom this Paragraph chiefly relates) are not able to ſtand in Argument before their Opponents; yet we muſt alſo grant, that there is a want of *Decorum* in the Victors carriage, while his Argument loſeth its efficacie, through the looſeneſs, luxury, or rigour of its expreſſion. For it is too apparent to conceal, that there are ſo many unmanly reflections in moſt of our late Controverſies, that diſcreet and ſober perſons loath the reading of thoſe Pages where they occur. Which gives occaſion for doubting that ſuch arguings ſo managed, proceed not from that *Spirit*

of

meekneſs wherewith the overtaken Brother ſhould be reſtored; nor were deſigned to procure Unity and Concord among us, ſeeing that ſo little of that *Charity* can therein be diſcerned, which is the bond of Peace, and ſure ground-work of all true Reconcilement. And if the conduct of our *Debates* were throughly conſidered, we might find this Church complaining like the Eagle in the Greek Epilogue, which ſeeing her Breaſt wounded with a feather'd Dart, cryed out with Tears, Alas! my own kind hath deſtroyed me. But to proceed.

It cannot be doubted, but that ſome opinions ſooner die by being contemn'd, than taken notice of. And I am perſwaded, that this *National Church* is now troubled with many Opinions which long ere this would have found their own Graves, if they had not been kept alive with oppoſition. In ſo much that it may be ſaid of this particular Church, what was of the Catholick, That if ſhe had ſtopt and damn'd up the Originals and Springs of Controverſies, rather than determining for one part, to give them as it were a Pipe and Conduit to convey them to Poſterity, ſhe had not ſuffer'd that Inundation of Opinions with which at this day ſhe is over-run. A policy

ſtill

ſtill in practice in the Popiſh Countries, where thoſe Books of Controverſies are ſcarce to be met with, wherein their Religion is maintained againſt Reformed Churches. By which means they live free from thoſe Diſſentions wherewith their Neighbours are afflicted, to their ſcandal and ruin: And I hope we may ſafely imitate their *Wiſdom*, whoſe *Errors* we abhor.

But if Controverſies were as neceſſary, as by ſome they are pretended to be, yet their conduct ought ſo far to be reformed, as that at leaſt there be a ceſſation from hoſtile Expreſſions, which have hitherto been of no better uſe than to exaſperate Men into a petulant and peeviſh vindication of that *Name*, under which they conceived themſelves to be reviled. Next, that the Diſputers would not vent and foam out their perſonal Piques and Animoſities under the pretence and cloke of aſſerting *Religion* and the *Church*. Laſtly, that they would aim at Peace and not Revenge. For how ſeemly ſoever the preſent carriage of Diſputes may be accounted in perſons of another Character, yet it is very ill-becoming thoſe who are ſtiled *Embaſſadors of Reconcilation*, and who ought to expreſs the Emphaſis of that Title, in recon-

reconciling Mens Wills with their Duties, and their Underſtandings with the Truth; in bringing the wicked to repentance, and the malicious to Charity; and to win all to a holy compliance with the deſign and Rule of the Bleſſed Author of Chriſtianity; which was, to heighten our Converſation to the moſt elevated pitch of true Vertue, Peace, and Holineſs; and that our Righteouſneſs ſhould exceed all theirs that ever went before us.

CHAP. IX.

The Juſt Matter and Subject of Controverſie in Religion examined. How by Catechiſing, and not Diſpute, we are therein to be reconciled.

AND not only the preſent conduct of Diſputes render them unſutable Medicines for our Diſeaſe; but alſo the things concerning Religion, which can with any Reaſon be pretended to be the matter thereof. Now whatever in Religion can be pretended to be diſputable, muſt either reſpect its Dreſs and Ornaments, or its Body and eſſential Parts; the Exteriour Appendages, or the Principles of Religion. If the Scruple, or the Diſpute be about

bout the Dreſs, outward Rites, Circumſtances, and Faſhion of Religion: than no contrivance ſeems more rational, or method more probable to aſſoil and remove it, than a due Catechiſing and inſtructing the ſcrupulous in the indiſpenſible Duties of the Fifth Commandment, and to tender him a plain Scheme of the Obligation that lies upon his Conſcience; *To honour and obey the King, and all that are put in Authority under him: to ſubmit himſelf to all his Teachers, Spiritual Paſtors and Maſters.*

How the *Supreme Powers* have Authority in the Externals of Religion.

How in Religion things indifferent in themſelves may paſs into a Law, which ought to be obeyed, as much as any Laws in indifferent things which relate to the good of the Civil State.

How things of never ſo low a ſtature, or indifferent concernment, having once received the Image and Superſcription of a Law, ought to be obey'd, both for the ſake of God and Conſcience.

How it can no way comply with the deſign of Government, to make good their Inſtitutions by dint of Argument: For if Authority were obliged to ſatisfie every medling and capricious *Brain*, they would have little or no time left

to be obeyed, *&c.* And when indiſcretion of zeal, or pride of Wit, engage to vindicate every thing that is lawfully commanded, it is to have a better opinion of our own, than the Magiſtrates Prudence; to think our Arguments will be more prevailing than their Commands; or that the former were requiſite to ſupport the latter, *&c.*

That theſe and the like things are proper for Catechiſm, and thereby the moſt gently and indiſcernably to be infuſed, none I preſume will gainſay. For they naturally fall in with thoſe Truths which belong to our duty toward man, of which we muſt be duly informed, ere we can therein be exact.

If the Diſſenter yield an obedient ear to this Inſtruction, there will be little fear of his continuing ſcrupulous to obey what his Superiors have a juſt power and right to enjoyn: If he do not hearken, then let him be devoted to the Civil Power, and leave the Magiſtrates to vindicate their own Authority; and to make that be done for *Wrath*, which would not for *Conſcience*. And I am tempted to think, that if at the *Happy Reſtauration* this way had been purſued, we long ere this had been ſenſible of its good Effects. And I will add this moreover,

over, That if the Orthodox Clergy, ever ſince God wonderfully reſtored them, had devoted the greateſt ſhare of their pains to plain Expoſitions and Paraphraſes of the Church-Catechiſm, they might long before this have gently gained both upon their Opinions and Affections, who (by the indiſcretion of other Methods) ſeem to be now alienated beyond retrieve. Conſcience of Obedience will anſwer all the Scruples of Minds diſpoſed to Peace; and for the Turbulent let them be anſwer'd with Rods and Axes.

The next thing that can be diſputed in Religion, beſides its dreſs and exterior Adherencies, are its *Body*, or *Principles*; ſuch I mean, as are abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation; for we need be ſollicitous for no more than what will ſave us. Now theſe are both few and plain. For as for thoſe numerous places of Scripture, Notices of Oral Tradition, which are dark and difficult, they are no further neceſſary to be underſtood in their primitive intention and meaning, than that we ſincerely believe, that whatſoever God thereby meant and intended, is infallibly true.

And things thus truly neceſſary, are as few as plain: St. *Paul* has reduced them

them to Two Articles: To believe that God is, and that he is a Rewarder of all them that come unto him. And to whom only thus much is given, it ſhall not be damnable that they believe no more. And if this (as it ſeems to) be the loweſt degree of Faith, God will therewith be pleaſed, if the means be wanting of riſing higher. *Cornelius* in *Acts* 10. who becauſe of his Alms and Prayers was accepted of God, had not been ſafe in that State, had he gone no further, after God had ſent St. *Peter* to inform him what he was to do more. The Charities and Devotions performed in the time of his Jewiſh Proſelytiſm, how far they might have ſtood him in ſtead, had he been vouchſafed no farther *Illumination*, is not the Queſtion; yet if he had ſtaid there, when means of going farther was afforded him, or if he had refuſed to believe in Chriſt after a ſufficient Revelation, he had then juſtly incurred the condemnation of loving *Darkneſs* more than *Light*, when Light was come unto him. Theſe inſtances are uſual in this matter, and tell us plainly, That as few Articles are of abſolute neceſſity, yet that their number is not the ſame unto all; ſome more, ſome leſs, as God hath given to every man, all

that is neceſſary for a Man to believe, which for that purpoſe is ſufficiently revealed unto him, and which God requires him to believe and practiſe. But there is none can ſet down how much every man ſhould believe, no more than he can ſet down how much every man ſhould eat.

But if notwithſtanding this paucity and plainneſs of the Principles of Religion, any ſhould therein be ſtill contentious, this Evil is not to be removed by Diſputation, but plain Catechiſing; whereby the Myſteries of Faith, and the Duties of Holy Life are to be explained. For Catechiſm is a brief and plain Inſtitution appointed for that end; and it takes care that the Principles of Religion be made ſo eaſie, that the meaneſt capacity may apprehend them; and yet in ſo conciſe and ſhort a manner, that the weakeſt Memory may not therefore be ſurcharged.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Diſputation unfit for the capacity of the generality of Diſſenters: Catechiſing proper, &c. Reaſons againſt Diſputes.

IN the laſt place, it will not a little import the clearing of the preſent ſubject, to enquire into the nature of Diſputes, and their Capacities who ſhould thereby be wrought upon. As to the former, it will ſuffice to obſerve, that Diſputation muſt be guided by *Terms* and *Rules* of *Art*, which when managed with the greateſt plainneſs whereof they are capable, fall ſhort of that obviouſneſs and familiarity, which is natural to Catechiſin. And as to the latter, it is very remarkable, 1. That the vulgar and common People make incomparably the greater number of *Diſſenters*. 2. That the Underſtandings of ſuch are uſually heavy, groſs, and dull, as ſymbolizing with their Callings and Conditions; and by conſequent, are unable to comprehend any profound and learned concluſions. And what is yet more conſiderable, the greateſt part of *Diſſenters* have no clear underſtanding of

of the very Errors which a *Logical Disputation* would confute. The most of them being ignorant of their own Opinions, and of the things against which they have imbib'd a secret and spiteful prejudice. For it was, and is still the policy of those who seduce the Vulgar into Faction and Schism, not to acquaint them further with the Opinions they were to abet, than to let them see that they were contrary to what they disliked in the Church. Insomuch that the poor Vulgar being deluded into *Separation*, retain but a very confused and imperfect Notion of what with great impetuousness they strive both for and against. And therefore it must needs be a very Melancholy Enterprise, to go to confute their Errors with depth of Argument, who are in a great measure ignorant of the very Errors themselves, and who do not distinctly know the opinions whereof they are to be convinced. The case of such people much resembling theirs, whom St. *Paul* thought to stand in need of Milk, and not of strong Meat; of a *Catechism* and not a *Controversie*; and to be taught Christianity from the very beginning. And the same Author being to confute those miscreant Hereticks, who said the Resurrection was already past, and there-

upon

upon gave themſelves to lewd living; he did it not with the heat and briskneſs of a Diſputant, but with the gravity and moderation of an Apoſtle: and having barely and calmly named the wild Opinions, he poſitively and plainly laid down thoſe Truths that confronted them, 2 *Tim.* 11. 18, 19. And he would have the *Gnoſtick* Hereticks to be encountred with Eccleſiaſtick Cenſures or Diſcipline, and not Diſputings, *whereof cometh envy, ſtrife, railings, evil ſurmiſes,* 1 *Tim.* 6. 4, 5. *Tit.* 3. 10.

If we were to ſet down the ſeveral *Confeſſions* of the *Perſwaſions* of all the Chriſtians in the World, they will be found to agree in more than is purely and ſimply neceſſary to Salvation. And it may ſeem very vain to diſpute and quarrel about the reſt. And therefore the whole buſineſs may be reſolved into a diligent, ſincere, and plain *Inſtruction*, how we ought to practiſe what we all acknowledge to be true; and to fall cloſe to doing thoſe duties which are unqueſtionable, and of univerſal acceptance. To perform what in Baptiſm we vowed, and live what we profeſs to believe. To make our ſelves fit to be juſtified, and not waſte time in controverting all the particulars that are made to relate to

Juſtifi-

juſtification. There is a knowledge in Religion which many earneſtly purſue, without which thouſands have entered into happineſs. We need ſeek for no more therein, than will perform the great work of Salvation, and bring us to the *end of our Hope*. And all this is either moſt aſſuredly to be had in our own *Catechiſm*, or we have been moſt dangerouſly impoſed upon.

But before we diſmiſs this Topick, there are a few things more, chiefly relating to the perſons to be converted; which methinks ought to give Catechiſing precedency of Controverſie in that affair. And the firſt thing is the long ſtanding of the Errors: For if the perſon has ſuck'd them in with his Milk, and been therewith at the firſt ſeaſon'd, then there is Education in the caſe, upon whoſe account alone not a few ſtick cloſe both to truth and falſhood: and if their Anceſtors have lived and died, and they have been brought up in ſuch a perſwaſion, it is, and indeed ought to be hard to remove it. One main reaſon why the Pagans were ſo backward to entertain Chriſtianity, was its enjoyning them to renounce thoſe Inſtitutions wherein they had been educated, and their Fore-fathers had lived, and thought them-

themſelves ſecure and happy. And *Tryphon* derided *Juſtin Martyr* for a man of an eaſie Perſwaſion, and too much Inconſtancy, becauſe he forſook *Plato* and embraced Chriſt. And *Cæcilius* in *Minutius Felix*, would have his *Antiſtes Veritatis*, a firm adherent to the Principles which his Anceſtors had delivered him. And they whoſe Pens were ſo excellently employed in confutation of Paganiſm, have generally complained that their greateſt ſweat was to pull down the *ſtrong hold* of Education; it being become the laſt refuge of Gentiliſm, out of which they would not be driven: For they reſolutely retained what they had received from their Anceſtors. For both *Jew* and *Mahumetan* are at this day of the ſame Opinion: For the former makes preſcription his Religion; and thinks it enough to out-face all Arguments brought againſt it, becauſe ſo many Rabbies live and die therein. and the latter has recourſe to his Education, and thinks himſelf ſecure in what he doth, becauſe he follows the Footſteps of thoſe many Cenerations that went before him. Indeed, all men are willing to die in the Religion wherein they were born. And *Cæcilius*'s *Pri-oribus credere* goes far with Chriſtians, as well

well as others; the first seasoning being incomparably more prevailing than any second.

Now, if those evil Opinions are to be removed, in which we have been educated; it can never be so well accomplished by tearing them down with the strength of Logick, as by instilling such false Principles, necessary and uncontroverted points, with simplicity and plainness, as of themselves will subvert the Errors of the first Instruction, and become the foundation of future Peace and Truth. And no way of teaching can so naturally be hereunto entituled as Catechising. For as to Disputation, it is generally had under a jealous aspect, as being thought subtle and reaching, and intended rather to celebrate a Triumph, than to effect a Conversion; and to advance the Disputer, not the Truth. Besides, it being so apt to mingle and blend with captious Sophisms, and false, but specious ways of *proving*, that men are ready to account it Imposture, not Conviction, that by such means is effected. And as for Preaching, a new Chapter will manifestly make it appear not to be so proper for this purpose as most imagine. But in Catechising there is such an honest simplicity, clear and

plain way of procedure, that none can therein ſuſpect any Sophiſm or *artificial dealing*, diſguiſes or ſhadowings.

In the next place, moſt men are either ſo modeſt in the apprehenſion of their own abilities, or ſo fearful to be enſnared in the great concerns of Religion, that they are unwilling to depend upon their own judgments in thoſe inſtances, eſpecially which they ſee are moſt diſputed and queſtioned. And therefore they think it no ſufficient Reaſon to forſake an Opinion, becauſe they cannot anſwer all the Objections, which by the ſubtle Advocate of a different Perſwaſion are brought againſt it. And ſo long as a man can really believe that there are others who can anſwer what is objected againſt his Opinion, he will never quit it, becauſe he cannot anſwer it himſelf. For to think an Argument cannot be anſwered, becauſe not by me, were to think the Lady muſt be carried by none, becauſe neither A. nor B. can win her; as if there were no more men in the world ſufficient for that purpoſe, but they two.

But if Diſputation ſhould be able to force men from theſe refuges, and to caſt away the groundleſs Opinions they embrace; yet if their Opinions twiſt

with

with ſome worldly Intereſt, and yield any ſecular advantage; if the Opiniatres can ſay, *By this craft we get our wealth*; then great is *Diana*, and your Argument is anſwered.

And he who conſiders how many temporal ends men ſerve with their Opinions, will have little hope to convince them, at leaſt by a way which is ſo generally ſuſpected.

If the Opinion pleaſe the humour of an eating Avarice, or a ſwelling Ambition; and bring either Wealth or Honour.

If it make its Abettors notorious for ſingularity, or get them a Vogue of being more Holy and Religious than their Neighbours.

If it place them in the pretended number of Sufferers and Perſecuted.

If it gratifie their Spleen, and give them but a more *plauſible pretence* to be *obborn, refractory, contradicting* of Authority, gainſayers of the eſtabliſh'd Religion, *&c.* then the cure muſt begin with the Affections and not the Judgment; and therefore a Diſpute is no fit preſcription. All that by Argument can be effected, before the *Paſſion* be duly mortified, will but bring the Opinioniſt to this: I ſee and approve the better,

but follow the worse; my *Passions* are too powerful for my *Reason*.

We might here also add, how Quarrels in Christian Religion contradict the Errand whereon it was sent into the World, which was for Love and Peace; to reconcile men to God, and among themselves. And if it yield contrary Fruits, they come as the Tares among the Wheat, by the craft and malice of the wicked One. For Strifes and Controversies are no more the effects of Religion, than of the Law: Were all men just and honest, we needed not disturb the Ashes of a moth eaten Statute; and had we no Self-ends and Interests, no base passions and designs, the itch of Disputation would not disquiet and make us so restless.

Before we close up this Chapter, it will not be much impertinent to observe how Disputation was at first opening of the Reformation an excellent Engine to advance it: And we find that the Reformers made importunate suits for publick Audience and Judgment; and the offer of open Disputation greatly assured the People of the soundness of their Cause, when they saw they were ready to put it upon publick Tryal. And more may be supposed to have followed the

the firſt Eſſays of the Reformation, out of an Opinion that it was good and true, being defended with ſuch freedom, ſimplicity and aſſurance, than by the ſtrength of thoſe Arguments which were at firſt brought to aſſert it. But then it is to be conſidered that the Reformers offer'd this kind of tryal to thoſe with whom they began to be at no leſs diſtance, than with members of a diſtinct and different Communion; and in places where they were in hope to gain, but in no danger to loſe Proſelytes. For they wiſely invaded the Adverſary in his own Country, and challeng'd him to a Diſpute in his own *Cities*, and in the throng of his Adherents. But upon how different Terms Diſputes can now be managed, either with Diſſenters or the common Enemy, I leave the truly conſiderate to determine. But ſince we are reſolved to fight, I could wiſh our valour were more diſcreet, than to encounter the Enemy within our own Bowels; to controvert our Religion in the place where it is legally eſtabliſhed. A thing not heard of in other Countries, where there is a greater Peace and more outward Religion. But I ſhall cloſe up this Topick with ſetting down what is uſually obſerved upon this Subject, *viz.*

1. That Religion is like neither to get nor ſave by Diſputes. 2. That Diſputes on this ſubject may have the ill-luck to make ſome ſuſpect the truth of all Religion, becauſe it is ſo much controverted. For weaker Heads ſeeing the Roof totter, are apt to ſuſpect there is no firmneſs in the foundation; and to conclude nothing is certain, if any thing be queſtion'd. 3. That in ſo great a miſt of Diſputes, many may grow halting and luke-warm, and think it their only ſafety to ſtand ſtill, or ſit down in Neutrality. 4. That for one ſin Diſputes have cured, they have begot innumerable. 5. That the ſtrength and practice of Religion have been ſenſibly impaired, ſince by the diſtemper'd heats of Mens Spirits it hath been rarified into ſubtil Controverſies. 6. That ſuſpence of Judgment, and exerciſe of Charity were ſafer and ſeemlier for Chriſtian men, than the hot purſuit of thoſe Controverſies, wherein they that are moſt fervent to diſpute, are not always the moſt able to determine. But what is more natural to the preſent purpoſe, it ſhould ſeriouſly be conſidered, That the People are neither to be confuted of their falſe, nor eſtabliſhed in the true Notices of Religion, by *Doubtful Diſputes*, but *plain Catechiſtical*

nchiſtical Doctrines. And as to our ſelves of this Church, ſeeing there can come nothing of our Contentions, but the mutual waſte of the parties contending, till a common Enemy dance in the Aſhes of us both; I ſhall ever wiſh, and moſt heartily pray, that the ſtrict commands of Peace and Unity, ſo frequent in the Goſpel, may at the laſt ſo prevail in this Nation, to the burying and utter oblivion of ſtrife, together with the cauſes that have either bred or brought it up: That things of ſmall moment never disjoyn them, whom one God, one Lord, one Faith, one Spirit, one Baptiſm, bands of ſo great force, have linked together: That a reſpective Eye towards things wherewith we ſhould not be diſquieted, make us not unable to ſpeak peaceably one to another. Finally, that no ſtrife may ever be heard of again, but who ſhall hate ſtrife moſt, and purſue peace with the ſwifteſt paces.

CHAP. XI.

Preaching, what it is: the several ways thereof used by the Church. What kind of Preaching among the Old Jews, and Primitive Christians. The Homilies considered.

HAving in the antecedent Chapter discharged Disputes and Controversies from being any suitable and proper means of reducing the Dissenters of our own Church, or winning the Members of the Roman: The next thing pretending to our healing is Preaching, which I here take to be *An open, solemn and Authoritative publication of Divine Mysteries.* And this the Church doth two several ways: 1. As a Witness. 2. As an Expositor.

And first, The Church Preacheth as a Witness, by publick reading the Sacred Scriptures, and by relating and testifying the Divine Truths which God in the inspired Volumes hath consigned her. And that this is no spurious sense of Preaching, we have him to assure us, who well understood the sense and importance both of the *Word* and *Thing*.

For

For in *Acts* 15. 21. the reading of *Moſes* in the Synagogues every Sabbath-day, is by St. *Paul* in the genuine and native ſignification of the Word, ſtyled Preaching. That this Preaching of *Moſes*, was a naked reading of his Law, we have a whole cloud of Expoſitors to atteſt it, beſides the clearneſs of the thing it ſelf. But I cannot be of their judgment who aſſert, That neither the Ancient nor Modern Jews had any ſuch thing as weekly Preaching upon any part of the Law of *Moſes*, and that upon this ground ſolely conclude the preaching of *Moſes* to be meer reading. For we find that the Old Jews had divers Men among them, who uſed to contribute their Talents to the Expoſition of the Leſſon that was read: and theſe in ordinary courſe were the Sons or Scholars of the Prophets, who were trained up in learning of the Law, and at the age of Thirty received the Title of Doctors; and till they obtained the Grace of immediate Inſpiration, or the Spirit of Propheſie, they continued to expound the Scriptures (not by Revelation, but) according to that knowledge which the ordinary bleſſing of God upon their Studies was able to compaſs. Anſwerable whereunto (as ſome think) was that

cuſtom

cuſtom among the Chriſtians, mentioned 1 *Cor.* 14. 29. And alſo thoſe Diſciples of the Prophets of the New Teſtament called Doctors, becauſe they were admitted to teach in the Church. But for mine own part, I rather underſtand the Word Doctor in St. *Paul*, of all ſuch Preſbyters as had abilities of Preaching and Teaching the People in their Aſſemblies. And that Presbyters and Doctors were all one, we may conclude from *Tertull. de Preſcript. c.* 3. *Quid ergò ſi Epiſcopus*, &c. What then if a Biſhop, if a Deacon, if a Widow, a Virgin, if a Doctor, if even a Martyr ſhall fall from the Rule? In this Catalogue of principal Eccleſiaſtick Orders, Presbyters muſt be underſtood by Doctors, unleſs we will deny them to have any room among the chief Ranks of the Church; which were both falſe and abſurd. And that inceſtuous perſon, with an Opinion of whom the *Corinthians* were puſt up, was (as is obſerved out of *Chryſoſtom* and *Theoderet*) one of their Doctors, that is, one of the Preſbyters of that Church, that exerciſed the Office of Preaching, and by that means bore a great ſway among the People,

But to return to the *reading of Moſes*, which began with the Moral Service of the

the Synagogue; when we find that the Moſaical Law was diſtinguiſhed into Diviſions anſwerable to the number of Weeks in the Year, that the whole Law in that ſpace might be read over: correſpondent to which Leſſons out of the Law, there were others out of the Prophets: one of which the Holy Jeſus took for his Subject at *Nazareth*, when after the manner of the Jewiſh Doctors he made his Expoſition, St. *Luke* 4. 16. And he did the like, St. *Mat.* 9. 35. where he is ſaid to teach [Διδασκων] in the Synagogue; which might be done without any pretenſion to ſuch Authority as was ſuppoſed in Κηρυσσειν, in Preaching; which in the Chriſtian uſe of the word in the New Teſtament differs from Teaching. Chriſt did both, St. *Mat.* 9. 35. He taught the Law, and preacht the Goſpel: At Thirty years old he expounded *Moſes*, as a Doctor (before which time the ancient Church made none Presbyters) and at the ſame time he preacht the Goſpel of the Kingdom. But ſtill the matter is plain enough, that the bare reading of *Moſes* in the Synagogues, is Preaching in the proper meaning: which ſort of Preaching is ſtill practiſed in the appointed Leſſons of the Church. The former out of the Old Teſta-

Testament, being derived like many wholesom things from the Synagogue; and the Second Lesson out of the New Testament, which was appointed, as most suppose, by the 16*th* Canon of the Council of *Laodicea*, celebrated in the year of Grace 364. Albeit *Justin Martyr* (who lived in the Second Age) seems to give the Lessons an elder date. For in his second Apology, he tells us, how all those who abide in Cities, and the adjacent Countries, meet in one place, on the day called Sunday; and the Ἀπομνημονεύματα, the Memoires and Records of the Apostles, together with the συγγράμματα, the Writings of the Prophets are read unto them, as far as the time and occasion serves: And that the Reader ceasing, the President in a Speech makes an Exhortation that they would imitate those good things which had been read. From which it is evidently to be concluded, that the Church in the first and best Ages of Christianity preacht as a Witness, when she read, and thereby attested the truth of the Holy Scriptures. And all men are in some degree capable thereby to be edified. For there is none understands the Scriptures so well, but he may improve by hearing them read in the Church. And

if

if we look into the Efficacy of the *Word*, it is wonderful that it ſhould be leſs as it is read, than as it is expounded; ſeeing that the one is the Word of God as it was inſpired by the Holy Ghoſt, and the other can no farther be ſo accounted, than as it keeps cloſe to the ſenſe and meaning thereof; which is not ſo eaſie, ſo long as Men are ſubject to Errors and Miſtakes, and have baſe Ends to ſerve, and carnal Circumſtances to be accompliſhed.

2. But becauſe all men ought to have ſuch a knowledge in God's Word as may be ſufficient to Salvation: and becauſe all will not attain to ſo much by bare reading thereof, therefore the Church Preacheth as an Expoſitor, by diſcovering and explaining what in Sacred Scripture is myſterious and obſcure; and by a ſeaſonable application of thoſe things which are more obvious and evident. And in this ſenſe Preaching is an Office in our own Church, which cannot be too highly magnified, nor too frequently celebrated, if it be agreeable to thoſe Homilies which were intended, not only to ſupply thoſe who have not the Gift of Preaching, ſufficiently to inſtruct the people committed to their Cure; but alſo to be a wholſom Rule, by which e-

ven

ven those who are able to preach should guide themselves in that publick Ministry.

But if Discourses at this day made in Pulpits ought only so far forth to be accounted Preaching, as they are agreeable to the Churches Sermons; then all is not Preaching which bears that name, and takes up the Circumstances thereunto allowed.

In the pious Sermons of the Church, we find Principles of Christianity solidly explained, Rules and Motives of honest and holy Life clearly laid down, and Perorations and Perswasions to continue therein, devoutly and charitably directed and applied. I shall not draw this into comparison; but only say, That I hope there is none need think it any diminution or disparagement to his Parts and Learning, to write after such a Copy. And however the Homilies may be decried through popular Ignorance, Prejudice, and Passion, yet no doubt but they are still necessary upon their first design, which was to help the Inabilities of some, to restrain the Indiscretions of others, and to take away those strifes about what is fitting to be preacht, caused by the variety of Mens Judgments, the extravgance of their Fancies, and the Byasses of several Interests. And

And as for the Homilies of this Church, they deſerve a much better eſteem than generally they receive; and would need no elaborate Vindication, if duly conſidered in their circumſtances. For in the firſt place, they are be to looked upon as popular Sermons, fitted unto the Capacities and Conditions of the Vulgar; who being more led by Paſſion than Reaſon, have need of ſuch Diſcourſes, as will rather regulate their will, than inform their judgment. They ſtanding in more need to have their Hearts and Conſciences wrought upon for good Life and Converſation, than their underſtanding and apprehenſion with any curious piece of Learning or Science. And that the greateſt ſhare of the Church-Homilies deals herein, there will need no other proof than their diligent peruſual.

In the Second place, The Church-Homilies are not to be looked upon as her Dogmatical Reſolutions and Poſitions, but as they contain godly and wholeſom Doctrine [Teaching] and neceſſary for the times when they were compoſed. For ſo much we are taught in the 35. Article. And therefore I humbly ſuppoſe, that every paſſage in the Homilies is not to be preſſed for the Faith

Faith and Doctrine of the Church, but that the whole ought to be conſidered as confronting the evil Opinions and Manners that at their compoſing were held and practiſed: and if ought of either be remaining, the Homilies may ſtill be needful upon their Primitive account.

In the laſt place, the very time in which the Homilies were compiled may excuſe many a Period therein. For our Anceſtors were lately come out of Popery, and converſed daily with Perſons of that Perſwaſion; and therefore ſevere dehortations were requiſite to preſerve them from Apoſtacy into thoſe Practices out of which they had ſo lately been recovered: which makes it no wonder if Enforcements and Exhortations to that purpoſe, *&c.* are ſometime too hardly ſtretched. And as for mine own part, I am ſo far from undervaluing the pious Sermons of the Church, that conſidering their circumſtances, I greatly eſteem them for their own *Worth*, and reſpect them above any other for their *Authority*.

And as to thoſe who reject Homilies upon the account that Apochryphal Writings are not to be uſed in the Church, it may ſuffice briefly to reply,

1. That

1. That Apochryphal Writings were publickly read in the Church in Primitive times: as the Epiſtle of *Clemens* in that of *Corinth.*

2. That *Hermes* (the ſame whom St. *Paul* ſaluted, *Rom.* 16. 14.) his *Paſtor* was publickly read in the Churches, and uſed by ſome of the moſt ancient Writers, and thought highly neceſſary. *Vide Euſeb. l.* 3. *c.* 3. What may be ſaid to this purpoſe of the στοιχειώδη συγγράμματα of *Theophilus* B. of *Antioch*, I leave to the judgment of others. *Vid. Euſeb. l.* 4. *c.* 23.

3. That in the Reformed Churches (not long ſince) *Calvins* Sermons upon *Job* were publickly read, by which means (ſaith *Beza* in his Preface to thoſe Sermons) the want of Preachers was ſupplied.

4. That it is all one to the People, whether the Sermon was made and printed in 1587, or on the laſt Sunday-Eve; whether it be out of a Book, or *ex tempore* of the Brain, if thereby they be truly edified. The Council of *Vaus* appointed the Homilies of the Fathers to be read by the Deacons in thoſe Churches, where the Presbyters through infirmity were abſent, *Concil. Vaſſu. c.* 4. *Vid.* Mr. *Hooker* Eccleſ. Pol. *lib.* 5.

5. That

5. That there is more ſecurity in a *Homily* than a *Lecture*; as there is in the Learning, Piety and diſcretion of many, than a ſingle perſon. In ſhort: there can be no miſchief in the word [Homilies] ſeeing the beſt Sermons (St. *Chryſoſtoms*) that ever were writ by any but an inſpired Pen, bear that Title. *Homileticus* and *Tractator* are often uſed indifferently: and the latter is ſufficiently known to ſignifie a Preacher, as *Tractare* to Preach, among the Writers of the Latin Church. And the Expoſition *Auguſtine* made upon St. *John* is called *Tractatus*, &c. And the Reaſon of the Name, was the handling of the Scriptures that had been read; the cuſtom being to Expound or Preach upon ſuch Portions of Scripture as were appointed for the Leſſons of the Day; as hath been obſerved out of *Juſtin Martyr*'s Second Apology. Something of this has been in uſe with our own Church, when the Sermon was ſpent in preſſing the intention of the Goſpel for ſuch a day unto the people; which is ſtill the cuſtom of the Romaniſts.

But leaving every one to his own Sentiment herein, I cannot perceive why in ſtead of villifying the old Homilies, we ſhould not rather deſire a ſupply of

new

new ones: ſuch as may contain a familiar Orthodox inſtruction in the whole Body of Chriſtian Doctrine, and of all the capital Duties therein required; That thereby an Uniform way of inſtruction might be maintained as no unlikely means both to regain and preſerve Peace and Unity in this Church.

But without further purſuing the notion of Preaching, we will here underſtand it in the moſt trodden and common acception, namely, as *A way of inſtructing the people contradiſtinct to Catechiſing*; and to which it *ſtands in uſual compariſon as ſtrong meat* to *Milk*. Now that Preaching in this obvious ſenſe is no proper means to recover us of our Diſſentions, and to beget in us a ſober and fixed Judgment in the things of Religion (as it is generally ſuppoſed) comes to be made manifeſt in this following Chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Preaching insufficient to restore our Dissentions. Catechising proper for that purpose, &c. *A Scruple removed.*

THat Difference which Divines make of things necessary to Salvation, either as a *Means* without which it cannot be had at all, or as *Commands* without whose observation those cannot be saved to whom those Commands are given, might have place here, if we were to speak of Preaching, as by some it is looked upon, for an Instrument without which not one poor Soul can be delivered from destruction, nor any Sabbath hallowed either by Priest or People as God requireth. Which was the Opinion of *T. C.* and is still of his Proselytes. But it belongs not to the purport of this *Discourse*, to set down how far *Preaching* (in the common Notice) is necessary as a means of Salvation: For then we must descend to particular Persons, in respect of whom the true value of its *necessity* must be taken, seeing that none will say it can be alike necessary to the Salvation of all.

There

There is none ſhall give more to the worth and neceſſity of Preaching, and be more frequent therein than my ſelf. But yet I doubt not, but that a man may be ſaved without it. For if a perſon who in his Infancy hath received Holy Baptiſm, at years of *Diſcernment*, ſhall by *Catechiſm* be minded of all that he then *vowed* and *promiſed*, and be careful to *believe* and *do* them, I ſee not what ſuch a Perſon wants of being ſet in a ſtate of Salvation, that with equal eſteemers can be accounted neceſſary as a means thereof; tho' he *knew* no more of Preaching, than they in *Act.* 19. did of the Holy Ghoſt.

But let Preaching be a means never ſo neceſſary to ſave our Souls; yet that it is not ſo ſutable and proper to reform and fix our erroneous and inconſtant Judgments (as is conceived) ſeems clear and evident upon the force and obviouſneſs of this ſingle inſtance; namely, That thoſe who have been, and ſtill are the greateſt admirers of popular Preaching, and the moſt eager hearers of many Sermons, and the moſt reſtleſs followers of ſeveral *Lecturers*, have notwithſtanding all this, been, and are, 1. The moſt inconſtant, 2. The moſt erroneous in their Opinions.

And firſt, as for their Giddineſs and Unconſtancy, there needs no other demon-

demonſtration thereof, than their rowling from one Opinion to another. For if they have ſtuck faſt to any one, yet that being evil, their adherence thereunto ought not to be accounted *Conſtancy*, but *Perverſeneſs*.

Now if we enquire into the cauſe of this fickleneſs of judgment ſo notorious among the zealous Sermoniſts, and *Vulgar Sectaries*, we ſhall find that it is a want of Catechizing; and that they were never duly inſtructed in thoſe Primary Principles of Religion, which would have rightly inform'd and eſtabliſhed their Judgments. Through the want whereof, they have proved like unballaſted Veſſels, liable to be toſſed, torn, and blown about with every guſt of contrary Doctrine, vented by thoſe who were crafty to deceive; and who have proved themſelves to be lineally deſcended of thoſe great pretenders to Godlineſs and Knowledg (mention'd in the Inſpired and Eccleſiaſtick Scriptures) and egregiouſly character'd, *for creeping into houſes, and ſeducing ſilly women, who were ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledg of the Truth.* Vide *Euſeb.* Eccleſ. Hiſt. *lib.* 2. *lib.* 3, & 4.

Nor need it create our wonder that ſuch perſons are ſo bad proficients in Religion

ligion, seeing they began to learn it at the wrong end, and ran to the Lecture before they had been at the Catechism. And indeed it cannot be imagined that those should make any laudable progress either in Divine or Humane Knowledg, who in the Rudiments and first grounds thereof, have had either none, or a very slight Education.

And as the most unsatiable Hearers of Sermons have proved wavering and unconstant in their judgments, for want of a timely and through Catechizing; so likewise upon the same ground they have been very erroneous and Opiniative. For this want of a plain *Institution* in the Principles of Truth, hath left them destitute of a proper Test, whereby they might be able to explore and try what is preacht, and to separate the *pretious* from the *vile*. Through the want whereof, they as greedily imbibe a false as true Doctrine; and are ready to change their Opinions according to the impression which the affectionate noise of the last Sermon has made upon their *Senses*.

Nor are they happier in their reading Holy Scriptures, than in hearing of them (thus) preacht. The Un-catechized run upon the same Rock in both.

For

For albeit the *Divine Word* is in it ſelf the pure Fountain of all *ſaving Truths*: yet perſons not trained up in a competent apprehenſion of Catechiſtical Principles, make it a ſink of pernicious Errors; ſucking Contention from the Breaſts of Peace; turning the ſincere Milk of Gods Word into the Poyſon of Aſps, and perverting the *Scripture* to their own deſtruction; while they make the Oracles of God not to ſpeak their own, but ſuch a Senſe and Language, as may beſt adjuſt their Deſigns and *Intereſts*.

And as no malice proves more implacable than that which ariſeth out of the Aſhes of an Apoſtate love: So no Errors are more dangerous than thoſe which proceed from a wrong interpreting and application of *the Word of Truth*. And as thoſe whoſe fancy has been playing with ſounds, think every thing they hear is tunable to their fancy: So thoſe whoſe minds are once infected with evil Opinions, think every Text ſpeaks according to the Opinions wherewith they are infected. And it is an Hypotheſis will meet with few Adverſaries, That Men who are prejudiced and prepoſſeſſed with Errors in Religion, cannot be reduced but by getting them therein

therein rightly principled, which was never yet attempted but by ſolid and perſpicuous Catechizing; it being by this that Men prove in Religion like the Houſe in the Goſpel founded upon a Rock, which by no force of ſtorms and winds could be ſubverted. And therefore if this *ground-work* be not ſurely laid, all *ſuperſtructures* in Religion lie upon the looſe Sand, and are eaſily waſht away by the inſinuating ſuggeſtions of falſe Teachers. And what is yet further to be conſidered, we ſee the reſt of the *Building* ſink with the Foundation: if that be ſhaken, all will go to ruine. And Chriſtians not well grounded in the Elements of Truth and Holineſs, will quickly be perſwaded to give themſelves up to any wild Opinion, or looſe Practice, and turn Schiſmatick or Traytor, to the great hazard and confuſion both of Church and State.

But if it be objected that Catechizing is a Plaiſter too narrow for our Sore, becauſe it cannot reach thoſe whoſe Age, or ſome other Circumſtance, excludes them the number of thoſe for whom this ſort of *Inſtruction* is appointed, notwithſtanding they have no leſs need thereof than others: To this it will be enough to return the ſucceeding conſiderations, *viz.*

1. That the Church obviated this Scruple, when in the last Edition of the Liturgy, she appointed the Catechism to be learned of *every person*. And in her Fifty ninth Canon enjoyn'd the Clergy to instruct all the ignorant Persons of their Parishes in the publick Catechism. And that those who bear the heavy load of many years might not decline this way of *Institution*, they may see it founded in the Apostolical practice; which was to Catechize the adult; as before was observed.

2. To be duly instructed in the Principles of Christianity, is a duty incumbent upon all, who by the *Knowledg* and *Practice* thereof hope to be eternally saved. And therefore if the Aged be therein ignorant, they have more reason to blush at their ignorance, than to be thus instructed; and with diligence and humility to wait at this *Gate of Knowledge*, rather than with scorn to disdain it.

3. If the Elder sort have either not been taught at all, or have forgot the chief Heads and Catechetical Fundamentals of Christianity, they now meet with a fair occasion both to learn and call them to mind. For by being present and attentive in hearing the Young-

er

er Catechized, the Ancient (and all) may be brought to know what they do not underſtand, to remember what they have forgot, and to be inform'd in what they have erred. So that at the ſame time Catechiſing will inſtruct the *Ignorant*, remember the *Forgetful*, and inform the *Erroneous*: and therefore adminiſter a Phyſick proper aud ſutable to our ſeveral Maladies: which cannot be pretended to by thoſe other Methods, that have hitherto been ſo eagerly purſued.

CHAP. XIII.

The Benefits of Catechizing, 1. In reſpect of the Civil State. *2. The Clergy. 3. The People. The Miſchiefs of private Schools. Objections againſt the conſtant practice of Catechizing removed.*

BUt beſides what has been diſcourſed, there are other *good Effects* of Catechiſing, which at leaſt may be as ſo many motives to enforce its practice.

And in the firſt place, Catechiſing is in an eminent manner conducive to the Peace and Welfare of the State; becauſe it takes care that the Younger ſort, who are the hopes of a Nation, be duly edu-

cated in thoſe Principles, on whoſe practice the ſafety and happineſs of a State depends. For to ſowe in the pure minds of *Youth* the Seeds of Vertue and Truth, before the Tares of Vice and Error, and the Weeds of the *World*, have canker'd and ſpoiled the Soil, is by the conſent of all wiſe men, a point of incomparable force and moment for the well-ordering and Government of all kind of Societies, and for making Commonwealths ever flouriſhing and happy. For by the means of Catechiſing, the Younger ſort will be planted and grow up in a due Conformity and Obedience to the Laws in being; which is undeniably a proper expedient to uphold *States* in the Terms wherein they are, and to free them from the danger of being ſo eaſily obvious to alteration and change. For the Opinions, of what nature ſoever, wherewith we are firſt ſeaſon'd, are of double force to any ſecond Perſwaſion and *Uſages*. And this makes the *Spaniſh* Nation early and careful in Catechiſing their Children; by which Method (ever ſince its uſe) they have not ſuffer'd the leaſt *diſturbance* and *alteration* in Church or *State*. That *ſerious people* having largely experienced the Truth of their own ſaying; *No es menos importante*

tante el ſer de la Doctrina que el de la Naturaleza. And in confirmation of this remark, it were eaſie to load the Margin with a numerous Quotation, and the Line with a tedious recital of many excellent Paſſages out of *Plato*, *Ariſtotle*, *Socrates*, *Seneca*, *Tacitus*, *Agell*, and almoſt all the learned Heathen: *Plutarch's* Education of Children doth abridge them all. But we need not go ſharpen our Tools with the Philiſtines, ſeeing an Iſraelite can do it better. For *Solomon* is plain, That the way to have Men Religious and Honeſt; to be peaceable both in Church and State; is from their Childhood to train them up (the Margin) to Catechize them, in the Duties that they owe unto both, *Prov.* 22. 6. And the Eccleſiaſtick and Politick Parents, as well as the Natural, will find great ſafety in obſerving the wiſe advice of *Ben Sirach. Bow down his neck while he is young, and beat on the ſides while he is a child; leſt he wax ſtubborn, and diſobedient, and ſo bring ſorrow to thine heart.* Eccluſ. 30. 12. But there needs hereof neither illuſtration nor enlargement. And therefore we ſhall cloſe this *Period* with that excellent Spaniard, *Son los afetos en la Ninez como el Veneno*, &c. Vices in Youth are as poyſon, which

if it once take ſeiſure of the Heart, the paleneſs it introduceth no Phyſick can remove. *Saavedra, Idea de un prin. pol. Chriſt. p.* 8.

Obedience, by a Catholick agreement, is the *Crown* and *Pillar*, the *Glory* and *Strength* of all Government. But this Obedience can never be firm and durable, if it be not founded in Conſcience. For according to the information of *this*, we ſhall find the expreſſes of the *other*. And notwithſtanding that unparallel'd Villanies have been every where acted under the pretence of Conſcience, yet this is ſo far from making it reaſonable to neglect and deride Conſcience, that it ſhould engage us by all good means to have it ſo regulated and inſtructed, that it may be no leſs ſerviceable to Peace and Union than it hath been (the pretence) to carry on Diſſention and Schiſm. And we need not doubt but a right Conſcience will as powerfully oblige to *Peace*, as an erroneous inſtigate to *Sedition*: And that if Men were once fully Catechiſed in the Duties of the *Second Table*, they would no longer be able to reſiſt the Eccleſiaſtick or Secular Power under the *Banner* of Conſcience.

In

In the ſecond place, an Unanimous uſe of Catechiſing the People in the ſame things, will not a little redound to the credit of the Clergy. For by this means they will teſtifie to the World their *Harmony* and *Conſent*: That they all teach the ſame things; and are not, as for lack hereof ſome imagine, like the Naturaliſts two-headed Serpent, pulling contrary ways, but all looking on the ſame Objects as the Seraphims on the Mercy-Seat.

And doubtleſs one end of a Church-Catechiſm was to preſerve an Uniform procedure in teaching the Common grounds of Religion. It being requiſite and convenient, that they who profeſs but one God, one Chriſt, one Baptiſm, and one Goſpel, ſhould conſent and be trained up in one Catechiſm. The inconvenience ariſing from the uſe of divers, being obſerved by Pope *Clemens* the Eighth, cauſed him to have a Catechiſm compiled, which, excluſive of all others, ſhould be taught in all thoſe Countries that call themſelves Catholick. *Ut ſublatâ modorum docendi varietate, uniforme, faciliuſq; inſtruendi idiotas & ſimplices de rebus fidei exercitium reddatur*; ſaith the *Congregatio Reformationis*, which reviſed and approved it,

And in the *Geneva* Liturgy, we find their Pastors limited not only to the same Catechism, but also to how much thereof they shall teach every *Lords day*, without any interpolations of their own. A thing which ought carefully to be provided for in our own Church: For if the Clergy be either left to a liberty of using divers Catechisms, or to use the Churches as they please; and under a pretence of the *legal Instruction*, take a more secure occasion to instil into the minds of the unwary people their own Opinions and Fancies, they may most maliciously deceive the intention of the Church, and for feeding, poyson their *Congregations*. They will prove false to their trust, and most perniciously contradict the name they bear. For the Clergy are Catechists in the most important sense of their Office, and are bound by that Title not to sound their own words, but to eccho and repeat what the Church has spoken; not only the Words and Syllables, but the sense and meaning.

But if the Clergy were never so unanimous and diligent both in the interpretation and practice of the Catechism, the benefit thereof will not be so visible, while there are those who unteach in private what is taught at Church. Which

is

is the undermining practice of many of those *Petite* Schools, wherewith the Nation is surcharged and abused. The most whereof being subservient to no better end than to give the *Youth* an ill seasoning as well in the Rudiments of Religion as Grammar. And albeit the redressing of this mischief has been piously recommended by the Sovereign Head of this Church, to *Persons* proper for that purpose; yet it is to be feared that the issue will be rather an *Encrease* of *Licenses*, than any *Abatement of undue School-Teachers*, contrary to the 77 and 79. Canons.

Till *Israel* wanted Smiths of their own, they never went to the *Philistins* to sharpen their Mattocks, It seems no less a want of Policy than Affection in the Church, while her own Breasts are full to suffer her Children to suck such Nurses, as with their Milk will infuse *Disobedience* against her.

The Jesuites usually say, That they never doubt to replant their Religion, where they have once planted a Colledge; because this being obtained, they will have opportunity to instruct the Youth (which is an employment they every where labour to engross to their Society) whereby they fear not but in time to eat out the Fathers *Principles* with

those they shall instil into the Son. And the present state of Affairs will easily turn this into no unseasonable Allusion.

But in the last place, the unanimous usage of the same Church-Catechism, and the modd'ling, ordering, and directing all publick Instructions according to this *Form of Sound Words*, will bring no less safety to the People, than Honour to the Clergy. For by this means the people will be delivered from the fear and peril of hearing contrary Doctrines, and consequently be edified and built up in such an Uniformity both of *Belief* and *Manners*, as may at once secure as well their Conversations as Judgments from Ungodliness and Error; which yields a fair probability of closing our present *breaches*, and preventing future.

And now seeing that the welfare of the State, the credit of the Clergy, and safety of the People do greatly importune and sollicite the practice of Catechising; there is nothing on the Clergies part that can retard it, but what I should be loath to name or imagine. But if it be said in behalf of the Laity, That Catechising being a constant repetition of the same thing, will so cloy the people, that they will grow weary of Gods House; to which we see them sufficiently

ently backward, even when they are there entertained with variety: Then I ſhall only wiſh all thoſe of the Holy Function maturely to conſider,

1. How low they have ſunk in their eſteem with the people, ſince their Office was ſo much devoted to pleaſe *their* humours.

2. That they ought not ſo much to reſpect the Peoples Fancies, as proficiency in Religion; the informing of their judgments, and directing their Conſciences, and not the humouring of their caprices, ought to be their chief aim and travel.

3. That they cannot deſerve the Name of Guides, who are ruled by thoſe whom they ſhould rule: the iſſue whereof will be no better than that of *the blind leading*, &c.

4. That if Catechiſing be a way of Inſtruction, which will beſt preſerve the Unity and Peace of the Church, and moſt ſolidly and ſecurely advance the edification of the people; then there is no need to be ſollicitous for any other ends or intereſts.

5. And as for the conſtant repetition and audience of the ſame Truths neceſſary to Salvation (as they are the Contents of the Church-Catechiſm) it may be juſtified by that old ſaying [*Nunquam ſatis*

satis docetur, quod nunquam satis discitur;] Those Lessons can never be too much taught, which can never be too much learned. For repetition in this case is to make the Catechism, what indeed it is, the Words of the Wise fastned like Nails by the Masters of Assemblies. And though in all the blows of the Hammer the act be the same, yet there is no stroke superfluous, while every one tends to compleat the Work. We may bring the same quarrel against *reading Books*, and *hearing Sermons*: for they are but old matter in new words; and if stript of *Dress* and *Disguise*, they would easily be discerned to be but so many varied repetitions. In Religion, if any thing be pretended to be *new*, we may safely conclude it is *false*.

6. But to evacuate the whole Objection, a diligent Catechist will find enough in the Church-Catechism to entertain his Congregation with variety, and to delight and profit all but *itching Ears*. For it wants nothing that is requisite to defend us in our *Journey*, or to save us when come to our *long home*. And those who are therein duely instructed, will find themselves so sufficiently guarded, that no Machinations of Heresie or Schism will be able to batter or undermine them.

them. Indeed the diligent uſe of Catechiſing will be its beſt Vindication, and moſt effectually anſwer all Objections againſt it. And without all Controverſie, there was never a greater neceſſity of enforcing what we now treat of, than the conjuncture wherein we live. For we ſee Satan is let looſe, and lays hard at the Souls of Chriſtians; not only by ſuch Opinions as diſturb our Peace, but would utterly deſtroy our Chriſtianity. Inſomuch that we have great need to ſpeak to every one, as that famous Anchorite to his Pillars upon the approach of an Earth-quake, *Stand faſt, for ye ſhall be ſhaken*: And ſtand faſt we cannot, if we want a ſure Foundation in Religion; and this cannot be expected, where it is not laid in a full and timely Catechiſing.

CHAP. XIV.

The Church-Catechiſm to be preferr'd before others, for its Authority, Uſefulneſs, Accompliſhment, Contents, &c.

BUt if after all that hath been or can be ſaid concerning the antiquity and benefits of Catechiſing in general, or more

more particularly in regard of its neceſſity and advantages in reſpect of the preſent temperament of our own Nation, it ſhould be diſputed what Catechiſm ought to be of publick uſe: I ſhall return, firſt, that although there are many excellent Catechiſms both in our own and Foreign Languages, compoſed by private perſons, out of the conſideration of the great emolument accrewing to the People from this of Teaching; yet there is none which with thoſe of this *Communion* ought to be of equal eſteem with the Catechiſm of the Church, if we conſider, as we ought, its Authority, Uſefulneſs, and Accompliſhment.

And in the firſt place, as for its Authority, the Church-Catechiſm hath no leſs pre-eminence above others, than the Decrees of Councils above the Inſtigations of a *private Spirit*. For the difference betwixt this and Catechiſms penn'd by particular perſons, is like that between the Laws and Statutes of the Kingdom, and the advice and judgment of private Subjects.

This is not to caſt any imputation or diſreſpect upon thoſe Catechiſms penn'd by *grave* and *learned Divines*; which are good in themſelves, and uſeful in their ſtation: but to ſhew, that the Church-Catechiſm

techiſm commands of us a peculiar Veneration, by reaſon of its publick Authority.

In the next place, by virtue of its Authority, the Church-Catechiſm hath an eſpecial Uſefulneſs, in being the common Teſt by which we may try who are of, or againſt our Communion. It is likewiſe an excellent Form of Religion, whereby particular perſons may examine their own Opinions and Sentiments, and give an account of their *Faith* to thoſe who would therein either *eſtabliſh* or *ſubvert* them.

In the laſt place, the Accompliſhment of the *Church-Catechiſm* greatly enhanſeth its Commendation. For if its Contents fall under an upright Review, it will merit no leſs praiſe than thoſe Compoſures, which are ſo exact, that they are neither defective nor redundant. For although ſome have objected its deficiency, as not taking any notice of the great Points of Faith, Juſtification, Sanctification, *&c.* It may hereunto be truly anſwer'd, That theſe Points are rather briefly expreſt, than totally omitted; and that it is not the omiſſion, but the ſhort and Orthodox Expreſſion thereof, which is the ground of the Exception. But if the nature of a Catechiſm were rightly

ly weighed, it would be no Objection against the Churches, that some things are therein either more darkly or more succinctly set down. For if every point of Doctrine were in a Catechism discuss'd at length, it would lose and forfeit its Name. But besides all this, it is easie for a *Clerk* of ordinary *Industry* and *Letters* to make all those Points plain and obvious out of the *Church-Catechism*, whose want is objected against its compleatness. And we have no reason to wonder or repine, that the Church hath left something to exercise the labours and abilities of her Clergy.

But to conclude: If we maturely examine the Catechism, we shall find therein such a natural evenness in the Method and Stile, and such a consistency and soundness in the Matter, as is not in any like composition easily to be matcht. As for the Introduction, it naturally carries us to all the circumstances of our admission into the Church, shewing when, by whom, after what manner, and by what means we became Christians. Next, it acquaints us with the great Priviledges, Benefits and Duties of Christianity, as also how by solemn Vow we stand obliged to perform them. The Question is *plain* and *short*;

the

the Anſwer full and *pithy*. wnd the Compilers thereof have manifeſted a ſingular wiſdom and care, in delivering the Rule in the feweſt and plaineſt words. For if they had loaden it with long indicative Periods, they might at once have both puzzl'd the underſtanding, and oppreſſed the memory of thoſe tender Capacities for whom chiefly it was deſigned.

If we look into the principal Chapters of the Catechiſm, the Church therein has followed the Copy of the beſt and ancienteſt Catechiſts: For like them, ſhe hath reduced to four general Heads, all that is truly neceſſary to Salvation. For retrenching what is but artificially neceſſary to acquire the Felicity of the future ſtate, all truly neceſſary thereunto, is reduceable, 1. To Faith, or things to be believed. 2. To Obedience, or things to be done. 3. To Prayer, or things to be received. 4. To Sacraments, or things to admit and eſtabliſh us in the Church.

As for the things we are to believe, they are ſumm'd in Twelve Articles, bearing the Name of the *Apoſtles Creed*, becauſe it was either of their compoſing, or contains the ſubſtance of all which they taught to be neceſſary for *ſingle Belief*;

lief; and was collected by Apostolical Men, out of their Writings, into this Form or Breviary that we now profess.

As for Obedience, the Decalogue is its Rule and Object, which compriseth a pure draught of practical Duties.

Prayer, which makes another Head of the Catechism, is an Auxiliary to the two former; for unless we beg and obtain the Divine Assistance, we can neither believe nor obey as we ought.—*Know this, that thou art not able to do these things of thy self, nor to walk in the Commandments of God without his special Grace, which thou must learn at all times to call for by diligent Prayer.* And the most absolute Form and Pattern of this Duty, is that which Christ collected when he reformed their *Euchologus*, out of the Traditions of the Elders, and recommended to his Church, and which bears his Name, *The Lords Prayer.*

The Sacraments are the fourth Head of Catechism, which God ordained in compliance with Mans infirmities and weakness. For being that those things which concern the *Endless Welfare* of the Rational Soul, are like it self of Spiritual and Divine Nature, and therefore not easily to be comprehended by those who have

have their Understanding limited by their Senses; it pleased God to appoint certain *Holy Rites* called Sacraments; which by outward and visible Signs represent unto us that inward and Spiritual Grace which he bestows upon us; and which are also means whereby we are partakers of that Grace, and Pledges to assure us of that participation.

CHAP. XV.

An Account of some Objections usually brought against the Church Catechism.

IT hath been generally observed, That Zeal, if it be not soberly governed when it striveth against any thing, that either in reality or but appearance, opposeth Religion, doth usually proceed with so great impetuousness, that Religion it self is in danger. And as it not seldom falls out, That an over-eager desire to pluck up Weeds, doth hazard the extirpation of the good Grain; so a sinister zeal against what is Superstitious, or but so pretended to be, doth often put both the Truth and Practice of Religion into suspence and debate. And although this is an Observation which might

might be easily attested through all the *Periods* of the Church, yet we need not look so far back for Testimony thereof, if we revolve what has happened among our selves within the Annals of our Memory. For we have seen the malice of the *Detracting Spirit* of Faction and Sedition exposing every Institute of the Church to contradiction and reproach; accounting it Argument enough to abandon every thing used by the Church, on which there could any way be fasten'd the odious Names of *Popish* and *Superstitious*.

And though this might be exemplified through the whole Body of the *Churches* Liturgy, yet the present Theme obliges me to remark only such Cavils as with greater speciousness are brought against the Catechism. For as for other Exceptions, the smalness of their importance renders very needless to return them any solid answer.

Now the first thing objected against the Catechism, respects its two first Questions, which are traduced as superfluous and trifling, as being to no more purpose, than to ask what we know already, and to be informed of that which we perfectly understood before: Seeing that usually falls out, that the Catechist is well

ell acquainted with the Catechumens ame, and all the circumſtances of its poſition. Now ſeeing that Catechiſm pretended to be an Abridgement, and at all know how it is the proper uty of Abridgements to leave out no- ing neceſſary, and to take nothing un- eceſſary in; the *Church Catechiſm* will e far from deſerving the Name of an bridgement, if its very entrance, or a- y thing therein be Trivial and Re- undant.

But this Objection will appear of all force and importance, when it is nſidered, that the Church in her Ca- chiſm obſerves the Method which is tural to Diſcourſes fram'd by Queſtion d Anſwer; whoſe entrance is ever me familiar Interrogative agreeable to e matter which is to be diſcourſed. nd ſeeing that the Church in her Ca- chiſm deſigned to inſtruct the igno- nt and younger ſort the Principles of at Religion which they profeſs, it was ry proper to begin her Inſtruction ith an enquiry for that Name in hich they firſt undertook that Pro- ſſion.

And in this reſpect our publick Cate- hiſm is more appoſite and genuine, than ther the *Roman Catechiſm* eſtabliſhed by

Pope

Pope *Clement* the Eighth, or that of *Geneva* annexed to their Liturgy: for after a long Preamble, the one begins with, *Quidnam Doctrina Christiana?* The other with, *Quelle est la Principale fin de la Vie humaine?*

But the entrance of our Church-Catechism will be further vindicated from the imputation of *levity* or *superfluousness*, when it is rightly considered, That it doth naturally guide the Catechised to the knowledge of what most nearly imports him: For (as 'twere by the hand) it gently carries him to all the concerning circumstances of his admission into the Church; by whom; at what time; and after what manner, he was made a Member of Christ, or received into the Congregation of his Flock, and had a Right conferr'd upon him to partake of all the Promises and Priviledges of the New Covenant Baptism being an inauguration into that Religious Society which Christ founded.

And as we read that the People of God have from the beginning had names of special signification (as *Adam*, *Chava*, *Abram*, &c.) whereby they were put in mind of some signal mark of Gods Providence toward them, and of their bounden duty of being piously thankful:

ful: So the Catechiſed, when he is demanded the Name in which he became a Chriſtian, it minds him of his obligation: 1. To depart from Iniquity, and thereby to walk worthy of that Name by which he is called. 2. To perform what in that Name he vowed and promiſed. 3. To examine his proficiency in that Religion into which by this name he was firſt initiate. 4. To expreſs a thankful remembrance of Chriſts ſingular favour, that he ſo far condeſcended, as to call him after his own Name.

But the Catechumen may upon another account be firſt called upon for his name, becauſe it is the badge and cognizance of that Holy Religion in which he is to be inſtructed, and of which he muſt give an account both to God and his Church, now and at the laſt. And ſuperſeding all other Reaſons, thoſe that have been thus briefly intimated, may (at leaſt) aſſiſt to clear the firſt queſtion and anſwer of the Catechiſm from the guilt of Trivialneſs, Vanity and Impertinency.

As to what is objected againſt the Second queſtion and anſwer, it will be ſufficient to reply, That our Church therein is conformable to the Primitive. For *Tertullian* (a Father of the Third age)

age) saith positively, That it was the custom of the Church in his time, to admit none to the benefit of the Scriptures, or to any dispensation concerning sacred and divine things, or to the scanning and examination of particular Questions of Religion, who could not first give a clear account of all material circumstances of their Reception into the Ark of Christ's Church. By whom, at what time, and after what manner they were received (which are the Ingredients of the second answer in the Church-Catechism) and whether they did stedfastly believe and maintain all those general Principles, wherein there ever was an universal an unanimous agreement among all Christians. And those who could not give an account thereof, were looked upon as such who had no right to the Communion of Christ's Church, and the Priviledges of his Kingdom. This Testimony of the Churches practice is to be seen in *Tertullian*'s *Præsc. adverſ. Hæretic.* A piece which was written by him, as I conceive, before the provocations of the *Roman* Clergy tempted him to turn a *Montaniſt*, and to be led away with the Enthusiastick delusions of that Sect. He lived in the third age, and was so high in the esteeem of the humble

and

and modest St. *Cyprian*, that he usually called him his *Master*. *Hierom. in Cat. Script. Eccles.* *Abraham Buchol. Chronolog.*

The imposition of the Name being confined to the precise time of Baptism, is by some looked upon as an impertinent Rigor, and tasting highly of Superstition. But they would be of another mind, if without prejudice they would have recourse to the *Use* of the Church, which hath always given Names to those Children she admitted into her Fellowship, at the punctual time of their admission: And this will be plainly discerned, if we look back unto Circumcision (the first Characteristical Sacrament) for from the time of its Institution, to that of its legal abolishment, the Male received his name at the Celebration of that truly primitive Initiatory.

Nor doth it any way evacuat this Assertion, that we read of some who had names before they were circumcised (after that admissory Rite was appointed) as *Benoni*, *Gershom*, and the Israelites born in the Wilderness; whom we may suppose not to have wanted Names, as they did Circumcision. But as touch-

Gen. 35. 18. Exod. 2. & 4. Josh. 5. 2.

ing the Example of *Benoni*, it affords little of Objection, seeing that at Circumcision his Name was changed. And what happen'd concerning *Gershom*, it was as the instance of the Israelites in the Desart, in this case not at all argumentative, because it was extraordinary, and when necessity forced them to dispence with Law. So that notwithstanding all this, we may conclude that Circumcision was the usual time for the imposition of Names. And the like custom has always been observed at Christian Baptism; the Church thinking it most convenient that the Baptised should at the same time receive his Christian Name, whereat he became a Christian.

But that for which the Church seems least accountable, and which makes the greatest noise, and which is objected with the fairest plausibility, is that which concerns Sureties in Baptism, whose Office is decri'd as unwarrantable, because they undertake what they cannot discharge. And the very name (of Godfathers and Godmothers) is spoken against, as a prophanation of the most Holy Name, being a Transgression of the Third Commandment. And this is an Objection which cannot be better assoiled, than by laying down

lown a clear Scheme of the Antiquity nd Reaſonableneſs of Sureties in Bap- iſm.

And in the firſt place the antiquity f Sureties, at and for the reception of Perſons into the Church, is indiſputa- le. For if we look into the Jewiſh Church when ſhe was in her beſt Puri- y, we ſhall find, that ever ſince the in- itution of Circumciſion there were ſtill ome appointed to be preſent, and hold nt the Male to the *Mohel* to be circum- iſed. And the perſon allotted for this Office, was ſome ſpecial Friend of the athers, who is called the Maſter of the Covenant (but uſually in Latin, *Initiati- nis Arbiter*, *Suſceptor*, *Compater*,) who t the Door of the Synagogue receives he child from the women, who are ermitted to go further; and entring he Synagogue, the *Suſceptor* holds the hild till the *Hammohel*, Circumciſer, as taken away the Foreskin. And how his cuſtom was primitively obſerved a- mong the Jews, and in point of Sure- ies derived to the Chriſtians, may be collected from what *Junius* has intima- ted upon *Eſay* 8. compared with Saint *Luke* 1. from the 57 to the 60 Verſe.

Now this custom of Sureties in the Jewish Church, need not at all reflect upon the like in the Christian. Being it was in the power of the latter to retain any Rite of the former that was apparently decent, significant, and edifying. For if every thing used by the Jew were to be rejected by the Christian, then most of our Religion must be cast out of doors. For it was not the design of our great Law-giver to abolish Judaism, but to amend, supply, and heighten it. Besides, we find not that those who were, or are the greatest Impugners, and most impetuous gainsayers of Sureties in Baptism, ever did it upon the account that it was a Rag of Judaism.

But how dark and questionable this custom may seem to some in its derivation and pedigree, yet its practice is clearly to be found in the first times of Christianity. As they must needs know who have observed how frequently ἀντίτυποι and Ἀνάδοχοι occur in the Greek Fathers; and *Susceptores*, *Sponsores*, and *Fide-jussores*, in the Latin. And how in both, the words signifie and refer to *Undertakers* at Baptism. *Platina* ascribes the Institution hereof unto *Hygin*, who, saith he, ordain'd, that at the least one *Patrimus* or *Matria* should be pre-

preſent at Baptiſm, and there hold the Infant till he was baptiſed. *Patrinus* and *Matrina* are old Words, which by new impoſition denoted thoſe who undertook for the Vertuous and Pious education of the Baptiſed.

Now if it be granted, that *Hygin* Biſhop of *Rome* was the Author of Godfathers and Godmothers, then this cuſtom is of an uncontroulable ancientneſs; for *Hygin* lived in the Second Age, and was a Martyr in the 144 of Salvation. And it is generally granted, that this good Biſhop took occaſion from thoſe Perſecutions which were heavy upon the Church, to appoint Sureties in Baptiſm. That in Caſe the Parents ſhould fall into violent reſtraint, baniſhment, or death, there might be ſome to take care of their childrens inſtruction in the truth of that Religion into which they were initiate.

But whatever was the firſt occaſion or ground of this Suretiſhip, we are certain that for its great ſtanding in the Church, it may take place among thoſe Primitive Rites, which were in all deſcending Ages to be retained. And this will appear from the very Nature and Reaſon of the thing it ſelf. And a cuſtom or Law, though it cannot be elder, yet it may ſafe-

ly be supposed to be as old as its chief Motive and Reason.

Now the neareſt Method to prove the reaſonableneſs of this cuſtom of Baptiſmal Sureties is to examine both what they do for the Child at the inſtant of his Baptiſm, and what they undertake for him for the future.

And as to what the Sureties do for the Child at the time he receives this Sacrament; *Platina* tells us, that was no more than to hold it in their arms till it was baptiſed, and to give it a name according, or at leaſt not contrary to the Parents Directions. And this is a thing ſo harmleſs, that none can have any colour to quarrel or reject it.

And as for what the Sureties undertake in the childs ſtead for the future, it can merit no juſt reprehenſion; ſeeing it is no more than to be careful that the child be vertuouſly brought up to lead a Godly and a Chriſtian Life, and be taught ſuch things as are neceſſary to the attainment of Eternal Happineſs: according to the Exhortation of the Office of Publick Baptiſm. And to the end that this might not be over-burthenſom to the Sureties, the Church provides that her Curates ſhall diligently teach whom ſhe has baptiſed; and

ſo

ſo to inſtruct them, that they may be fit for confirmation. At which time the Sureties are diſcharged of their Bands, becauſe at Confirmation the Baptiſed anſwer and undertake in their own Names, what their Sureties have done in their ſtead.

But it may ſtill be replied, That the Parents are fitteſt to engage for their Children, and that ſo weighty a concernment ought not to be transferr'd unto Strangers. I muſt confeſs, this was once my own Perſwaſion; out of which I could not argue my ſelf, till I conſider'd: 1. That by the Law both of God and Nature, Parents are obliged to inſtruct their children in the things of God; and therefore need not to enter into Bonds. 2. That Parents may die before their Children arrive to a capacity of being inſtructed; or they may be ignorant and unable, or negligent and careleſs to inſtruct them. 3. That the Parents may be corrupted with Schiſm and Hereſie, and by reaſon thereof be altogether unfit to perform this Office. And indeed, if we reflect upon the temperament of the Age we live in, the Church may ſeem never to have had more need of Sureties for their Orthodox inſtruction, whom ſhe takes into her Com-

mution. For so many Parents are infatuated with erronious Opinions, that none are more improper to engage for the regular *Catechism* of their children than themselves. And if there were none of these Reasons herein argumentative, yet the thing it self is of so great importance, that the Church hath ever thought it insecure to have none bound but the Parents. And there are, who upon no contemptible account, esteem it very incongruous, that those should present the Child to be washt of that pollution which it derived from them. And upon this score it might be, that the Father was wont not to be admitted to be present at the Baptism of his Child, but stood at the Church-door while the Infant was carried in and baptized.

Zanchius, who was well read in the Writings of the ancient Fathers of the Church, speaking of this custom of Godfathers and Godmothers in his Commentaries upon the *Ephesians*, assures of its antiquity; that it opposeth no period of Holy Writ; that it is an Effect of the Parents love and care to their children thus to make all possible provision for their Religious Institution: That it is beneficial for the Infant in

case

caſe of the Parents death, and an aſſiſtance to the Parents if they live: That it is a means to beget and increaſe mutual kindneſs among Neighbours; becauſe hereby a ſpiritual alliance is contracted, which may greatly conduce to the propagation and maintenance of Chriſtian charity. And we may add to all this, that not a few children would inevitably be debarr'd of Holy Baptiſm, if none but their Parents could be admitted thereunto to preſent them, and to ſtipulate in their Names.

But it is in the next place ſtrongly objected againſt what is vowed by the Sureties in behalf of the Baptized, as alſo that it looks very contrary to the Nature of a Vow for one to make it in behalf of another. And here not to meddle with the Nature of Vows in General, nor particularly of that of Baptiſm; it may ſufficiently evacuate all Scruples, plainly to conſider, that no more is done in this Baptiſmal Suretiſhip, than is both done and approved in Secular affairs, in which it is allowed, that Infants act by their Tutors, Proxies and Guardians, and that too in matters of no ſmaller concernment than Eſpouſals and E-

ſtates, *&c*, and at a time when they are as uncapable to underſtand and perform what is undertaken in their Names, as here at Baptiſm. It has alſo been ever thought both juſt and reaſonable for debtors to procure others to be bound with them for payment of that for which at preſent they are inſufficient. And we may ſafely ſuppoſe that God will be as merciful in ſuch caſes as our ſelves; and that he will as readily accept of Sureties for the Chriſtian Education of an Innocent Infant, as we for an inſufficient Debtor.

But for a more evident comprehenſion of the whole caſe, I conceive it may be thus ſtated. At the Font when the Infant is brought to Holy Baptiſm, the Sureties put on his Perſon, and ſubſtitute themſelves into his place: They repreſent his Voice, and anſwer in his ſtead. [All which is to be ſeen in the demands and anſwers in the adminiſtration of Publick Baptiſm of Infants to be uſed in the *Church*.] And the Infant engageth under this Perſonation, That when he comes to years, he will perform the Vow and Promiſe thus made by his Subſtitutes. He and they being by inter-

interpretation but as one person; and therefore the Infant, when grown up, is as much bound to discharge what at Baptism was promised in his Name, as if he had done it himself. Now by this Substitution the Sureties perform a great act of *Charity*: for they do that for the child, which by no means he could do for himself; for they get him an early interest in the priviledges of Christianity, which in the ordinary way of procedure, cannot be had without Baptism: and this cannot be had without making the Vow thereof; and it is impossible for the Infant to make this Vow, but by its Proxies; who oblige themselves no further, than to see that the *Infant be taught so soon as he shall be able to learn, what a Solemn Vow, Promise, and Profession he has made by his Substitutes*, or Sureties.

And by this short account of what the Godfathers and Godmothers do for the Infant in Baptism, it is easie to apprehend, that none need withdraw from this Pious Work, for the supposed Difficulty of its Discharge. And therefore those who rightly understand this Suretiship, and ye-

yet refuse it, they may be thought rather to want Charity than Power; and that they are unwilling, and not unable to perform it.

Nor doth it less reflect upon their Deportment, who turn this pious Custom into an idle Ceremony, by privately devolving upon the Parents, what they publickly undertook for their children; which doth at once frustrate and contradict the intendment of the Church, and delude the Congregation of God's people.

But it may be further objected, That the Vow of Baptism being made by others, renders the Performance and Observation thereof by the *Child*, a thing of constraint, and not of election: for the baptized, when grown up, doth not follow his own choice, but his Sureties; and allows of what was at Baptism promised in his behalf, not out of willingness but pre-engagement; all which is opppoſite to the genuine Nature of a Vow.

And in Answer to this Objection, it will be convenient to observe, That the Vow and Promise made by Sureties in Baptism is not absolute; for in an absolute sense, no man can undertake for another. But the Vow is conditional; and

and the Child when come to age, muſt either own it, or forfeit the benefits of Baptiſm. And as thoſe who are married, being *Minors*, when come to mature years, may chuſe whether the Marriage ſhall be ratified or reſcinded: So it is in the power of the Baptized at years of diſcretion, to acknowledge or renounce the Vow of Baptiſm. If he allow of, and conſent to what at holy Baptiſm was vowed in his Name (which is ſtill ſuppoſed at the making of the Vow,) then he is bound actually to believe and do it. But if he diſclaim it (which is in his power) then he diſowns all Intereſt and Priviledge in Chriſt, with all the benefits of that Society into which by Baptiſm he became incorporate.

The Catechiſm teacheth us out of the Creed, to believe, That God the Son hath redeemed all mankind; which cannot be true (ſay many) becauſe he died only for the Elect. But they would have no reaſon to impugn the Churches Doctrine in this particular, if thoſe Scriptures were impartially conſidered by them, whereon this Poſition is founded. A few of which are here barely quoted in the Margin, on

Ezek. 18. 23, 32. S. *Joh.* 3. 16. *Heb.* 2. 9. *Rom.* 1. 4, 5. S. *Joh.* 4. 42. 1 *Tim.* 4. 10. S. *Joh.* 1. 7. 2 S. *Pet.* 3. 9.

pur-

purpose to shew the ground of the Churches Doctrine, and to guide those to the Topicks of their confutation, who gainsay this, *I believe in God the Son, who hath redeemed me and all mankind.* That his death was both sufficient and intentional to save all mankind, but is effectual and efficacious for none but *true Believers*, is a distinction which being wisely and soberly understood, would remove that clashing, which some fancy there is, betwixt the Catechism and the Seventeenth Article of the Church.

Many other Scruples brought against this *excellent Catechism*, are purposely omitted, because they will easily be obviated in its (intended) Exposition. Besides, I have bound my self to observe the *Laws* of an Essay; which I must unavoidably violate, if I should venture upon all such Enlargements as the Subject would naturally endure. I had rather be censured for having said too little than too much.

Deus dedit his quoq; finem.

THE

THE CONCLUSION.

WE have hitherto examin'd the Age and Advantages of Catechiſing, and found it to ſtand above the imputation of being either Novel or Superfluous. So that the only remaining Enquiry concerns its Practice. And this will exact no long diſquiſition, ſeeing every Station of men are therein ſo perfunctory and negligent. Now, as in a common Contagion, no leſs care muſt be had of the ſound than infirm; and the cure of ſingle perſons is required to the removal of the Epidemical Diſeaſe: So remiſsneſs in Catechiſing being become a common Malady, it behoves every one to look after amendment, to the end that the Church may be healed of all thoſe Diſtempers faln upon her through lack of Catechiſing, and which, if not prevented with a timely interpoſition

tion thereof, will effect that deſtruction which they threaten and prognoſticate.

And if we look into the perſons who are capable herein to be delinquent, they may be reduced either to ſuch as the Church has ordained to adminiſter, or receive this Sovereign Medicine. The former are the Clergy in the whole denomination; for he among them who excepts, deceives both himſelf and the Church. And notwithſtanding that the Clergy in *Sacred Writ*, bear divers appellations, importing the Dignity, Power, Holineſs, Excellency, Care, Tenderneſs, Diſcretion, and Incommunity of their Functions; yet there is no Title wherein they are more concerned than that of Catechiſt. For it doth (firſt) more immediately relate to that Errand on which from the beginning they were ſent into the world—— *Go teach*, &c. And next, unto the want and ſupply of thoſe over whom God hath made them Overſeers. And while they own themſelves to be the Churches Miniſters, they ſhould take care to ſerve her in her own way. For ſince that was left for paths of their own, and more oyl and labour has been ſpent in *arguing*, than in *teaching* the Princi-

ples

ples of Chriſtianity, it is ſadly viſible how Religion has thriven among us. For from endeavouring to ſupport Chriſtianity with Buttreſſes of our own, captious and malitious Enemies take occaſion to conclude that it cannot ſtand without them. The ſuperſtructure ſeems to be the proper matter of our care, where we believe the Ground-work lies immoveable. And bleſſed be the Author and Finiſher of our Faith, that he has founded it upon a Rock; and maketh it ſo ſtrong, that the Gates of Hell, the ſtrength and ſubtilty of her greateſt Enemies can never be able to prevail againſt it. Were we to deal with open Adverſaries of the Faith (*Jew*, *Mahometan*, *Pagan*) the Ancient Fathers have ſhewn us an excellent way of procedure; but having to do with Profeſſors, whoſe evil manners have corrupted their Underſtanding, not the proving of the verity of the Chriſtian Religion, but the enforcement of its Practice, ſeems to be the only neceſſary preſcription.

But without being deciſive, or ſtinting the ſpirit of any man, I hope it may be lawful to wiſh that the Clergy (out of a true ſenſe of what they are enjoyn'd and bound to obey, by the 59*th* Canon) would return to the *good old way* of Catechiſing:

techising: for since this was shoulder'd out by *Sermoning*, the people have been possessed with strange Whimsies in Religion, and hurried on by the Spirit of Schism and Sedition into all manner of Villanies.

A learned and pious Bishop of this Church doth (as I am told) in his own Person and Cathedral perform this Office. A few such leading Examples would soon raise the sunk Esteem of Catechising, and vindicate it from being thought a Drudgery fit only for children and Curates. And I humbly conjecture, that there is no Clergy-man need think it any lessening of his *Greatness* and *Learning*, to be seen teaching *God's People* after the manner of the Holy Apostles and Primitive Bishops.

Our Ancestors (who knew something as well as we) were not ignorant of the necessity and benefit of what is now most affectionately recommended; when Queen *Elizabeth* made it her 44*th* Injunction, and King *James* his command, That afternoon-Lectures should be converted into Explanations of some necessary Rudiments of the Catechism; out of a prudent fore-sight that this would be more advantageous to the *People*, than some *extempore* irruptions, or enlarging a few con-

contrived Breviates, upon deſultory Texts.

The Laity are the next ſort that herein can be faulty, to whoſe *attentive thoughts* I would moſt earneſtly recommend, firſt, the ſerious peruſal of the Rubrick adjoyned to the Catechiſm, together with the 59*th* Canon: Next, the examination of their knowledge in Religion; that by that former they may know their *Duty*; and by the latter their want of being catechiſed: And by both be induced to embrace what to their own damage and the *Churches* affliction they have undutifully neglected.

FINIS.

THE CONTENTS.

The Introduction. Fol. 1.

CHAP. I.

OF *Catechising. Its Name, Use Secular and Religious.* p. 5.

CHAP. II.

The Age of Catechism. The Institution of Adam's *and* Abraham's *Family. The Schools of the Prophets. The continual use of Catchising among the* Jews, *particularly after the Erection of the Synagogues. Their Benefit thereby.* p. 9.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Catechiſing in times of the Apoſtles. Evidences thereof in St. Pauls *Epiſtles. The Contents of their* Catechiſm. p. 25.

CHAP. IV.

The Apoſtles Catechiſts in ſeveral Provinces. The Declenſion and Reſtauration of Catechiſing. Catechiſts Styled Exorciſts, &c. p. 32.

CHAP. V.

The Antiquity of Catechiſm *probable upon the account of its convenience: In reſpect of the Object; Method of Inſtruction.* P. 35.

CHAP. VI.

Catechiſm *neceſſary in reſpect of the encreaſe and advancement of Spiritual Knowledge: To have a diſtinct Underſtanding of things neceſſary to Salvation, &c.* p. 39.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Catechiſing the moſt ſutable means to heal the Diſtempers of this Church. Several Propoſitions to be ſuppoſed. A ſhort digreſſion concerning our Diſorders. p. 42.

CHAP. VIII.

The Methods uſed for our reclaiming, ſurveyed, proving ineffectual. p. 57.

CHAP. IX.

The Juſt Matter and Subject of Controverſie in Religion examined. How by Catechiſing, and not Diſpute, we are therein to be reconciled. p. 62.

CHAP. X.

Diſputation unfit for the capacity of the generality of Diſſenters: Catechiſing proper, &c. *Reaſons againſt Diſputes.* p. 68.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Preaching, what it is: the ſeveral ways thereof uſed by the Church. What kind of Preaching among the Old Jews, and Primitive Chriſtians. The Homilies conſidered. p. 80.

CHAP. XII.

Preaching inſufficient to reſtore our Diſſentions. Catechiſing proper for that purpoſe, &c. *A Scruple removed.* p. 92.

CHAP. XIII.

The Benefits of Catechizing, 1. *In reſpect of the* Civil State. 2. *The Clergy.* 3. *The People. The Miſchiefs of private Schools. Objections againſt the conſtant practice of Catechizing removed.* p. 99.

CHAP. XIV.

The Church-Catechiſm to be preferr'd before others, for its Authority, Uſefulneſs, Accompliſhment, Contents, &c. p. 102.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

An Account of some Objections usually brought against the Church-Catechism. 115

The Conclusion. p. 135